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# MEMOIRS

# AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

# FRANCIS HORNER, M.P.

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EDITED BY HIS BROTHER,

LEONARD HORNER, ESQ. F.R.S.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1843.

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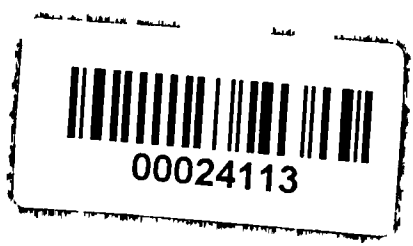

TO

THE HONOURABLE

# LORD MURRAY.

My dear Lord Murray,

All who read these volumes will feel, I am persuaded, as I do, that I could not dedicate them to any one with so much propriety as to yourself. They will have seen that from early youth to the close of my brother's life, you were his intimate and confidential friend; and that in your affection he found one of the chief sources of his happiness.

Your attachment to him led you to preserve all his letters, and you were thus enabled to supply me with the principal materials for this work. Without the extensive correspondence which you placed in my hands, I must have failed in accomplishing the object I had in view; the giving, in his own words, a continuous narrative of my brother's life.

I beg you to accept this dedication, in testimony of my grateful sense of these obligations, and as an expression of my own sincere regard.

I am, my dear Lord Murray,

Very faithfully yours,

Leonard Horner.

Bedford Place, London,
20th Feb. 1843.

# PREFACE.

Soon after Mr. Horner's death, in the spring of 1817, his family and more intimate friends were desirous that a biographical memoir of him should be published, ample materials for such a work having been found. He left several papers in his own handwriting, which disclosed many interesting circumstances in his early life and education, and others which threw light on the history of his later years. An extensive series of letters from various correspondents was also found, and when application was made to the writers of them, a large number of my brother's own letters was obtained; his friends very generally expressing a kind interest in the contemplated work.

Towards the close of that year, the papers and correspondence were placed in the hands of an intimate friend of my brother, well qualified to do justice to such a subject. But amidst the engagements of official life in London, and the attractions of a widely extended society, it is scarcely possible to command that degree of leisure, which most men would deem indispensable for the composition of such a work, especially when a large collection of manuscript must previously be examined: thus it was with my valued friend; and after several years had elapsed,

he returned the papers to me, without having had an opportunity of doing more than examine those of the most interest.

After a short interval, they were sent to another eminent person; who, by his early and uninterrupted intimacy with my brother, his varied accomplishments, and his known powers as a writer, was peculiarly fitted to be his biographer; but, after the materials had been some years in his possession, he too was forced, by the pressure of professional engagements and the duties of office, to decline the work he had been solicited to undertake, and which he at one time hoped he might have been able to execute.

I now relinquished all hope of the attainment of an object I so much desired: I lamented, in common with many others, that a debt which was felt to be due to the memory of my brother should not be paid, and that materials should be lost, which might have been so employed as to have extended his usefulness beyond the term of his brief existence. I knew my own powers to be unequal to the composition of a biography of one whose studies and pursuits had been so different from my own, even if there had been no objection on the ground of my near relationship.

But the publication of the Memoirs of Sir Samuel Romilly suggested a new course. We are told by the editors of that valuable work that "they have confined themselves to the task of selection and arrangement," that "they have sedulously abstained from comment and remark," and that all they have given had "been

written by their father, or by one of his correspondents." As the materials they had employed appeared to me to be, in many respects, very similar to those in my own possession, I felt an assurance that, by a careful selection from the papers and correspondence, by the addition of a few pages at the commencement and close, and by filling up occasional blanks in the course of the narrative, it would be possible for me to make my brother himself narrate the history of his life. Such is the work I now venture to lay before the public.

The letters of my brother which I have given constitute little more than a third of the number I possess; I have also given extracts only from a Journal he kept between 1798 and 1803; and I have not inserted more than a small number of the letters of some of his correspondents. I have been obliged to omit much that I would willingly have published; but I restricted my work to two volumes, which I considered the utmost length to which it could with any propriety be extended. In the choice of the materials, I have selected those which bear most directly upon my brother's character, opinions, and personal history; some of the letters, if taken by themselves, may be thought too unimportant for publication, but they must be viewed as links in the narrative.

There are, I doubt not, many highly educated persons, many of our younger statesmen, even among those who have risen to distinction, to whom the name of Francis Horner is unknown. Twenty-six

eventful years have passed since his voice was heard in Parliament; and the rapid succession of eminent men who appear upon the stage of public life soon effaces the remembrance of those who have gone before; except the few who, gifted with health as well as superior talents, lived to act the chief parts, and on whom the public eye had long been fixed; or those who, by their writings, have established a lasting reputation. But if this work should fall into the hands of any of the persons to whom I have now alluded, I would ask them to refer to the account of what took place in the House of Commons on my brother's death, and to the other "tributes" to his memory, which they will find in the second volume. They will then, I think, be disposed to allow, that I have not been misled by my affection, in believing that the history of one of whom such things could be said, by such men, cannot be otherwise than interesting and instructive.

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# MEMOIRS AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

# FRANCIS HORNER, M.P.

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Francis Horner was the eldest son of Mr. John Horner, a merchant of Edinburgh, and of Joanna Baillie; and was born there on the 12th of August, 1778. His paternal grandfather was a native of Yarm in Yorkshire, who married Miss Hay, a lady from Edinburgh: he died very young, and his widow returned with three infant children to her native place. His maternal grandfather, Mr. John Baillie, was a younger son of the family of Baillie of Dochfour, in Inverness-shire; he was admitted a member of the Society of Writers to the Signet in Edinburgh in 1721, and married Miss Anne Broughton, the daughter of a gentleman who had been sent from the Excise Office in London, to introduce some improvements in that office in Edinburgh.*

Francis Horner enjoyed all those advantages which are derived, in early life, from the watchful care of sensible and judicious parents. His father had assiduously cultivated a naturally strong understanding; and by his general information, refined tastes, and

* Mrs. Baillie's eldest brother, the Rev. Thomas Broughton, A.M. was rector of Allhallows, in Lombard Street, and of Wotton, in Surrey, and from 1743 to 1777 was secretary of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge; an office afterwards filled by his son-in-law, the Rev. Dr. Gaskin, referred to in the sequel.

liberal sentiments, was well qualified to give a right direction to the talents of which his son gave an early promise. His mother's excellent qualities had an influence no less beneficial in the formation of her son's character, for she united to a gentle nature, great good sense, activity of mind, and an earnest unobtrusive piety, which shone forth in her whole conduct and in all her sentiments, and which she carefully impressed on the minds of her children. Never had parents a richer reward for anxious care and confiding liberality; they received from this cherished object of their love and pride, proofs of warm affection and respectful deference, at all times and in all circumstances, from early youth to the close of his life, as the following pages abundantly testify; they witnessed the full developement of that character, of the noblest part of which, inflexible purity of principle, they had themselves laid the foundation; they saw him loved and honoured by the wise and good, and acknowledged as an ornament to his country.

I have been able to collect only a few anecdotes of my brother's childhood and school-boy days. His mother relates* that "Frank was a delicate infant, and continued long a weakly child. I taught him to read, and thought him dull; but at six years of age he distinguished himself at his first school, and was the pride of his master: at the first annual examination after he went to the school, upon his reciting a poem, I overheard one of the examiners, the late Dr. Adam, ask 'the name of that fine boy.' His earliest friend was Henry Brougham†, for before we left St.

* In a letter to myself, soon after my brother's death, I requested her to note down such particulars, relating to that period, as she could then call to mind.

† The present Lord Brougham.

David Street, in May, 1780, they used to run together on the pavement before our house. Frank never was idle, even at that age; when he came home from church he used often to repeat parts of the service in the nursery; he said he should like to be a parson, and my mother made him a black gown and bands. One day when Mr. Blair, afterwards President of the Court of Session, was dining with us, my little fellow was invited into the room after dinner, dressed in his gown and bands; and the manner in which he went through his part struck Mr. Blair so much, that he said to me, 'you must bring up that boy to the bar.' He went to the theatre for the first time the winter following; the play was Hamlet, with the afterpiece of the Poor Soldier: much to our astonishment, he soon after repeated the soliloquy of Hamlet, acted several of the different characters, even to the ghost, without confusion, did the same with some of those in the Poor Soldier, and sang the songs with great humour. He was not unhealthy, but never robust; I often thought that his anxiety to learn his lessons made him indifferent about his meals. He had a private tutor in the evening, who, as all who ever superintended his education, gave him the highest praise."

In 1786, Francis Horner was sent to the High School of Edinburgh, where, according to the routine of the school, he became a pupil of William Nicol, a man of a vigorous understanding, but a very indifferent master, whose name has been saved from oblivion by the verses of Burns, having been one of the poet's jovial companions. He remained four years with Nicol, who taught the elements of Latin only, after which he was placed under the care of a very different person, the learned and amiable Dr. Alexander Adam, then rector of the school, under whose

tuition he continued two years. He always retained a warm affection for this excellent man, and on the occasion of Dr. Adam's death, in 1809, he thus records his obligations to his old master : — "I have always felt a most agreeable debt of gratitude to him, for the love he gave me in early life, for the pursuits which are still my best source of happiness, as well as for the most valuable impressions in all subjects of political opinion." * At the annual public examination of the High School, on the 10th of August, 1792, he was the *Dux* of the rector's class; that is, he was the head boy of the whole school when he left it to go to college. On this occasion, as I have learned from one of his schoolfellows †, who was present, he delivered to Dr. Adam a book which the boys of the class had subscribed for, as a testimony of their respect and gratitude; and it was on this occasion that he first spoke in public; it was a Latin speech, of his own composition; and Lord Cockburn adds, — "it was well composed and well spoken." Although he was always of a cheerful temper, he had, even when a young man, a certain gravity and earnestness of character, which led his more intimate friends to call him jocosely — "the sage" — and "the ancient Horner;" but I have been told by two of his early companions ‡ that, as a boy, he was given to fun and gaiety, and that he acted comic parts and sang humorous songs in some private theatricals with great spirit.

In November, 1792, he was matriculated as a stu-

* Letter to Mr. Murray, 23d Dec. 1809.

† Henry Cockburn, now Lord Cockburn, one of the Judges of the Court of Session in Scotland.

‡ James Pillans, now Professor of Humanity in the University of Edinburgh, and John Archibald Murray, second son of Lord Henderland, one of the Judges of the Court of Session in Scotland. Mr. Murray was Lord Advocate from 1834 to 1839, when he was appointed a Judge of the Court of Session.

dent of the University of Edinburgh. That seminary may be said to have been then at the height of its reputation: Robertson, the historian, was the principal; and among its professors were some of the most distinguished names in science and literature of that period. The chair of moral philosophy was filled by Dugald Stewart; that of mathematics, by John Playfair; of natural philosophy, by John Robison; of chemistry, by Joseph Black; of Greek, by Andrew Dalzel; and of rhetoric by the Rev. Dr. Hugh Blair; while, in the medical school, anatomy was taught by the second Alexander Monro, and the practice of physic by James Gregory.

He remained at college until the close of the session in the summer of 1795, and during these three years, that is, between the fourteenth and seventeenth years of his age, he prosecuted his Latin and Greek studies, acquired the elements of mathematics and natural philosophy, attended the lectures of the professors of logic, moral philosophy, and rhetoric, and acquired some familiarity with the French language. In the last year he was a member of the "Juvenile Literary Society," one of those useful institutions which are established by the students of the college for the discussion of literary subjects by essays and debates; and he soon became a leading member of the society, as was also his friend Henry Brougham.

He had now arrived at a time of life when it was necessary to think of his future profession: his own predilection for the bar was encouraged by his father, and the plan of his future education was regulated accordingly. He had as yet lived constantly at home; but his father being anxious to give him those advantages which a youth derives from being thrown upon his own resources among strangers, and, at the same

time, thinking it desirable that he should be freed from the disadvantages of a provincial dialect to a public speaker, it was determined that, for the next year at least, he should prosecute his studies in England. Upon the recommendation of his mother's relative, the Rev. Dr. Gaskin, he was placed under the care of the Rev. John Hewlett *, at Shacklewell, in Middlesex.

From the letters he wrote to his family and friends during his stay at Shacklewell, I have selected those which best indicate the nature and extent of his acquirements at the close of his academical education, the studies in which he was next engaged, and the progress he made while under the guidance of his accomplished and judicious tutor and friend. And now, having briefly narrated such particulars of my brother's early life as his own papers did not supply, but which the reader will naturally expect to be made acquainted with, I leave him to be his own biographer.

1795. Æt. 18.

LETTER I. TO HIS FATHER.

Honoured Father, Shacklewell, 23d Nov. 1795.

I received the agreeable information of your safe arrival at Edinburgh by my dear mother's letter. I hope she believes me grateful for the very kind injunctions it contains, and that I shall endeavour, by obedience, to deserve a frequent repetition of them. Beside their influence in guiding me to what is proper and becoming, I shall derive from them the pleasure of considering myself under her immediate direction,

* Of Magdalen College, Cambridge, afterwards Morning Preacher at the Foundling Hospital, and now Rector of Hilgay, in Norfolk.

and of sometimes forgetting that I am at a distance from home. 1795. Æt. 18.

I shall endeavour, my dear father, to give you an idea of the manner in which I now pass my time; though that I shall be better able to do some time afterwards, when I have methodised the business of each day, and become accustomed to a fixed plan, without which it is impossible to carry on study of any kind with the least profit or despatch. I make a point of reading Greek or Latin every day. The Annals of Tacitus, and Iliad of Homer, are my present books in that line; whatever assistance is necessary I receive from Mr. Hewlett, who generally sits with me an hour every day. The afternoon I devote sometimes to mathematics, and otherwise to the formation of English style by translating from the French, attempting original composition (both of which Mr. Hewlett examines), and by perusing classical authors, such as, at present, Bolingbroke and Junius. When my books come up, and Dr. Gaskin (as he has been so good as promise) obtains me access to one of the public libraries in town, I shall be enabled to extend and improve this plan. With respect to one great object for which you were at the expense and trouble of placing me here, I think I am beginning to *pronounce* some *words* as Englishmen do, and just to *feel* the difference between the *rhythm* of their conversation and mine. I find, however, that it will be a much more difficult matter than it would have been two or three years ago, and than it would be now, were I blessed with a more acute and delicate ear.

Remember me to my mother, and her mother's family, and to all my friends in Edinburgh. I shall not recal the tears of affliction, by condoling with Leonard on the death of his favourite rabbit.

1795. Æt. 18. Allow me, my dear father, to believe myself your dutiful and affectionate son,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER II. TO MR. JOHN ARCHIBALD MURRAY.

My dear Murray, Shacklewell, 24th Nov. 1795.

I leave the Port Royal Grammar and Lexicon of Hedericus to refresh myself in your company, to inform you where I have taken up my winter quarters, and to interrogate you rigidly with regard to your plans at college, and the proceedings of that most polite, learned, and scientific body, the *Juvenile Literary Society*.

On Friday, 6th Nov., I fixed my abode at Shacklewell. The rev. gentleman, under whose superintendence I am, keeps a boarding-school for boys, on which account I have my bed and study at a room in a different part of the village; by this means I am at a distance from the boys, the music of whose motions is not always exactly the same with that which Pythagoras ascribed to the celestial spheres, so harmonious as not to be heard. At Mr. Hewlett's house, however, I take all my meals; and he generally sits with me about an hour every day in my own room. He is a most agreeable man; an elegant and general scholar, in the most extensive sense of the words. I consider myself peculiarly happy in having fallen into his hands, and believe I shall pass the ensuing twelvemonth with much more pleasure and much more profit than I expected when I saw you last.

This detail I have given you, because I believe you would be as glad to hear of my having found an

agreeable situation, as I am anxious about every thing that interests you. Write me, my dear friend, as soon as possible. You may believe with what pleasure I must seize every letter from Edinburgh. 1795. Æt. 18.

Tell me how you are managing your studies, what classes you attend, and what books you are devouring. I see nothing to prevent us carrying on our *Disputationes Academicæ*, though we are four hundred miles asunder. Metaphysics can war loud enough, and I can get franks every week. Come, I order you in the name of Hume, and Smith, and Dugald Stewart, to select a question immediately, and to begin upon it in your very first letter. The controversy would be much the better for our friend Brougham's assistance, and I shall give him a hint. In the meantime remember me to him.

On Monday evening last, about 7 o'clock, I muttered the *bonum felix faustumque*, and hope it had some effect. May Minerva hover over your meetings, and the Muses take possession of Gunter's slate.*

Your very affectionate friend,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER III. TO MR. J. A. MURRAY.

My dear Murray, London, 15th Feb. 1796.

It gives me very great satisfaction to find that you have such a relish for the new branch of science on which you have lately entered. All my former labours in that way are of little use to me, I find, in England; ignorance of the improvement of late years extends the influence of that well-founded

* The Literary Society held its meetings in the mathematical classroom of the college. — ED.

1796. Æt. 18. opinion, which the English literati and all unlearned men have formed against the absurd and trifling metaphysics of the schoolmen, and the dangerous refinements of modern materialists. This prejudice, however, will of course wear gradually away, and there can be but little rashness or unfounded expectation, in believing that in the revolution of a century the science of the human mind will hold the same rank, be as generally cultivated, and applied to practical uses equally important as the science of experimental philosophy is at present. The free communication of sentiments, which subsists between us, my dear Murray, will, I am sure, suffer me to give you, from my own experience, an advice with regard to the first prosecutions of this study, viz., to write on all the subjects which the professor prescribes. The advantages, in every respect, which attend this, I believe to be immensely great. With regard to Reid, the arguments against the fidelity of the senses must be refuted (in the logical treatise which you mention), I should apprehend, in a manner different from his, as it rests entirely on what is thought his greatest improvement in the science, the accurate distinction which he has established betwixt sensation and perception.

I should be much obliged to you, if you will give me an abstract of what "The Art of Thinking" says on this subject. I am not at all surprised at your disliking, on first perusal, "The Inquiry into the Human Mind." The style in which it is written, as well as many other *Aberdonian* productions that were published about the same time, would be indecent, even in a common political pamphlet. If you have not yet read Mr. Stewart's book, I can assure you that you have high pleasure in store.

1796.
Æt. 18.

You ask, my dear Murray, for an account of my studies; at present, I confine them to the impressing on my mind more strongly those very few branches of knowledge which I had cultivated before leaving Edinburgh; mathematics, languages, and your science of *nousology*, occupying each a portion of my daily employment. This I am obliged to do, on account of the time which I must spend in considering the principles of English pronunciation, and English composition. In prosecution of the last of these, I sometimes attempt myself, sometimes translate from my favourite Rousseau — carrying on at the same time, under the direction of my friend Mr. Hewlett, a very rigid examination of the style of Mr. Hume in his *History*, which I am astonished to find abound so much both in inaccuracies and inelegancies.

I have not been at the House of Commons so frequently as you would suppose. Added to the distance, and the inconvenience of getting home after midnight, when it is above five miles off, and part of that, too, in the country, I must confess that I was greatly disappointed in my expectations with regard to the eloquence of the British Senate. The best of them — and the good are very few — speak with such an unaccountable tone, they have so little grace in their action and delivery, and such a set of cant appropriated phrases have crept into use, that he who has previously formed ideas of eloquence from what he has read of that of Greece and Rome, must find the speeches even of Fox and Pitt miserably inferior. The one, indeed, speaks with great animation, and, I am convinced, from the warmest sincerity of heart; and the other has a most wonderful fluency and correctness, approaching almost to mechanical movement. But neither of them has proceeded so far

1796. Æt. 18. as the observance of Shakspeare's rule; for the one *saws the air* with his hands, and the other with his whole body. —— The paper can contain no more.

Yours affectionately,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER IV. TO MR. J. A. MURRAY.

My dear Murray, London, 21st June, 1796.

I am afraid it is unnecessary for me to point out to you the apparent inconsistency between the very high pleasure which I enjoy in writing to you, and the remissness with which I answer your letters; and yet the incongruity is more than apparent, for both those are really the case. You are satisfied of one, and I feel the other. You are now, I dare say, deeply engaged in the philosophy of the human mind—favour me with a solution of the problem. In the meantime I must proceed, according to your desire, to oppose some of the positions of your late excellent letter.

You say a speaker's object in the House of Commons is not so much to move the passions of his audience as to convince their understandings. What their object *is*, would, I believe, be very difficult to ascertain; in considering what it *ought to be*, I should be apt to differ from you. When we recollect that perhaps not one member comes into the chapel without his opinion previously formed on the questions that are to be discussed, and that his opinion is almost always established merely on a consideration of the interest of the side to which he has attached himself, without any general discussion; it would seem fruitless to think of working on that man's

understanding, because he has set out from the beginning with a defiance to all argument and reasoning. I should think it necessary to go to the original foundation of his opinions, raise one set of passions to destroy the effect of others; show him it is his interest to adopt the conclusions which I point out; and hurry away his whole thoughts by such a stream of argument and passion, as will make it impossible for him to decline being what I am resolved he shall be, and at the same time lead him to consider the change in his mind as the effect merely of his own judgment. This was the object Demosthenes seems to have had in view, and to this effect Lord Chatham's eloquence certainly approximated. From this part of your letter I must pass over your many admirable observations on the action of speakers, because I find it utterly impossible to raise any cavil or shadow of objection, till I come to what you say with regard to the taste of the multitude, of the justness of which permit me to doubt. I should even hesitate with regard to the fact, and that without instituting a comparison between the mob that issued from the purlieus of the Piræus, and the frightful group whom I t'other day saw round the hustings in Covent Garden, for we were speaking of the House of Commons: but admitting the fact to be true, the true seat of eloquence is amid passion, and ignorance, and prejudice, and fury — *Ac veluti magno in populo cum sæpe coorta est:* I need only mention one line, though I wish to recal the whole to your imagination. Nay, I think that in the House of Commons the manner of the orator ought perhaps to be more artful and more violent than even in addressing such mobs as those already noticed: as I should suppose it more easy to turn the current of

1796. Æt. 18.

1796. Æt. 18. enthusiasm, when once it flows, than to excite any considerable degree of it in a cold, selfish, and interested mind.

Thus, my dear Murray, if you have indeed got so far, have I endeavoured to enlarge upon two objections to the matter contained in your last letter. * * * *

Yours, very affectionately,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER V. TO HIS FATHER.

Honoured Father, Monday, 4th July, 1796.

I returned yesterday with Mr. Hewlett from our tour through the Isle of Wight, and had the pleasure of finding a letter from you.

There were four of us in company—the additional two being Mr. Hewlett's brother, and a French gentleman who lives in the house. We had a most agreeable excursion; and, beside the enjoyment at the time, I hope I have derived some information from it, and certainly have received additional strength and health, which was become a little necessary; as, for some time before, I had been subject to rather a troublesome affection of my lungs. This I thought unnecessary to mention before, and it would not now have occurred, had I not thought of stating the advantages that may be received from such a pedestrian tour as I have lately had.

As far as I am able to judge, the Isle of Wight is, of all the countries which I have seen, the best calculated for *laying out*, as it is called, for the gratification of that elegant talent, the object of which is to transfer the scenes of nature from one

situation to another, and by happy combinations to create scenes even superior to those of nature; the country abounds so fully in all the materials on which a mind possessed of this talent may exercise itself, and the ground is so beautifully and infinitely varied. 1796. Æt. 18.

In one or two places, advantage has been taken of these circumstances; but, in general, it must be confessed, that nature appears in her most simple and undisguised attire. Nothing forces you to believe any thing you see to have been done in order to conceal her primitive form: no clump of trees planted to remove the deformity of a flat unvaried surface; no toil of art to break the uniformity of lines. I frequently felt those placid and charming associations which the poets of antiquity will ever furnish, but which it is perhaps at any time ridiculous to express, as to some it appears ludicrous in any one to profess to feel.

The impression, however, which the prospects of the Isle of Wight leave on the mind is by no means uniform, any more than the objects of which the prospects are composed. There are many opportunities for recalling the manners and the actions of former days, among which the extensive and venerable remains of Carisbrook Castle afford the most striking. Along the coast, also, the cliffs are in many places very grand; on the south coast, where they are most so, they seem all one uniform stratum of chalk, and rise to the perpendicular height of from three to six hundred feet above the sea. Here Shakspeare's description was tritely appropriated; even the circumstances of the choughs and samphire-gatherers were not wanting.

From these cliffs we had fine prospects of the

1796. Æt. 18. interior part of the island and the opposite coasts of Hampshire, and on the other hand the immense extent of the English Channel. The noblest prospect of the kind I ever saw,—perhaps I may say, that can any where be seen,—is that of Portsmouth and Spithead from the rocks of the Priory, a seat of Judge Grose's; it is situated within a mile of St. Helens. With regard to the inhabitants, they have all the simplicity, and hospitality, and good-breeding, which are the blessings of a country devoted to agriculture; their dialect appears the same as that of Hampshire, and the other western counties, except on the northern coast, where they have an opportunity of intercourse with Southampton and Portsmouth.

You will judge from the appearance of the last sheet what I intended to be the extent of this letter. But I find it not an easy matter even to stop here, and I could not resist the temptation which you offered me of travelling again, with the additional pleasure of your company, over the grounds which had lately afforded me so much satisfaction.

Present my kindest love to my dear mother, and say, that now that I have an idea of her being unwell, I feel more than ever the desire of being at home, and of showing, in person to her and you, my dear father, that I am a very dutiful and affectionate son.

FRA. HORNER.

### LETTER VI. TO HIS FATHER.

My dear Father, Shacklewell, 3d September, 1796.

I shall now endeavour to give you the idea which I myself have formed of my progress in pro-

nunciation, &c.; whether that will be accurate I am uncertain, but I hope you will not doubt its being *true*, so far as it goes; on such a subject vanity would be imprudent, because my friends will be disposed of themselves to form rather high expectations, and an affectation of modesty would be equally ridiculous. 1796. Æt. 19.

I am sensible that I have by no means made myself master of all the variety of the English accents: I am now and then detected in a Scotch inflexion, but hardly ever without previously detecting myself. This circumstance will inform you of the degree of advance I have made, as the first and longest step to improvement (especially in such delicate matters as intonations of voice and shades of sound) is the ability of feeling where the fault lies. It satisfies me of what is in my power, of what might be done. This is the point, however, of which I am most afraid, when I shall be deprived of the examples and models that at present surround me, and furnish me the advantages of habitual imitation; and even diligence will have no other guide than memory.

I must now come to the other two points, of pronunciation and reading. The latter is evidently independent of my stay in England: wherever the talent is made an object of ambition, it may be acquired any where by means of regular and well-directed practice. In this likewise I have the double difficulty of getting rid of one set of habits, and establishing a new one. I have begun to advance in both. I am sure that I read a great deal better than I did some months ago. But a great deal remains, which, amidst so many objects of attention, can only be the work of time. As to pronunciation, that also can only be formed in the style which I have proposed to myself,

1796. Æt. 19. by gradual practice. As to the retention of it, I have no fears at all: after what I have already acquired, it may be pursued, I should suppose, as well at Edinburgh as in London.

In this way I have endeavoured to give you as faithful a copy as I can express of my real opinion of my own acquisitions and disappointments. At the same time, I shall desire of Mr. Hewlett to write to you upon the same subject; by a comparison of the two you will probably get at the real truth.

Meanwhile, permit me to express to you how much satisfaction and pride I derive from reflecting that the consequences of the plan of my coming to England are so strikingly coincident with the expectations which you formed, even before it was begun to be put in execution. I have been unable to pass the limits which you foresaw would be prescribed by the nature of the thing, and I have not kept very much within them.

I deeply regret the very great expense which I have put you to, in consequence of my residence in London. But let me entreat you to believe that to have arisen, in a great measure, from the necessity which such a situation imposed on me; and allow me sincerity in assuring you that I can recollect no expenditure in which I have any other circumstance to regret, or accuse myself of, but that of losing the money. I can recollect no circumstance of voluntary extravagance, though it is evident I have been extravagant on the whole. At the same time, as most of your very liberal allowance has been laid out in books, I hope you will not consider it as altogether thrown away; with the same expense I might have appeared less so to you. But I would not suffer myself to be tempted by the hopes of what my own

industry might in time refund to incur the disgrace of dependence on another person, or free myself at all from that dependence in which there is no circumstance of which I am not proud, except that of being subjected, by want of management or occasional folly, sometimes to abuse it. I shall therefore accept of the offer which you have made me, hoping I may never again be in a situation to be ashamed to need such an offer. 1796. Æt. 19.

The paper will now barely allow me to send my duty and love to my dear mother: tell her how much I long to return home. Give my love to my aunt, my sisters, &c., and all friends; and permit me to call myself

Your truly affectionate son,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER VII. FROM HIS FATHER.

My dear Frank, Edinburgh, 10th Sept. 1796.

I had the pleasure to receive your letter of the 3d on Tuesday. A few days before, I got a letter from Dr. Webb at Alton, who gave me the pleasing accounts of your health being quite established.

I am highly obliged to you for the particular account you give me of the progress you have made towards one of the principal objects for which you went to London. I have no doubt but it is perfectly just, and I am sure it is greater than your modesty will allow.

With respect to the expense of your education, it never gives me a moment's thought: the money that

1796. ÆT. 19.

is laid out in fitting you for your profession cannot be called mis-spent. I wish you not only to be as well educated as others that are to follow the law, but it is my ambition to have you better educated. Of all professions there is none in which enlarged views are more required, than in the distribution of justice. In your allowance I did not mean that books should be included; in that you have a charge against me. At the same time that I wish you to be comfortable in every respect, I cannot too strongly inculcate economy. It is a necessary virtue to all; and however the shallow part of mankind may despise it, it leads certainly to independence, which is a grand object to every man of a high spirit.

Your mother sends her love to you, in which all here join her.

I am ever, my dear Frank,
Your truly affectionate father,
JOHN HORNER.

LETTER VIII. FROM HIS FATHER.

My dear Frank, Edinburgh, 27th Sept. 1796.

I received a letter from Mr. Hewlett on Sunday morning: it gives me a very satisfactory account of your progress; such, indeed, as I had every reason to expect.

I have been thinking for some time whether it would not be greatly for your improvement to remain a little longer; and from every inquiry I have made, I believe you could study the civil law, or rather read the elementary part of it, by yourself, and with some directions from your friends. I have written to Mr. Hewlett on the subject, and leave the matter entirely

to him and yourself. If six months, or even twelve months longer, will give you a fluent and graceful enunciation, and at the same time will not interrupt your more important objects, I am of opinion you should remain ; and though it will be a great trial, both to your mother and me, to be deprived of you, yet we must not let our feelings stand in the way of what is for your interest and advantage. I therefore beg you will write to me frankly on the subject ; and I desire that the expense may not enter into your consideration. 1796. Æt. 19.

I have inclosed two letters from Brougham and Reddie.* You will give my compliments to Mr. Hewlett and all friends. Your mother and all the family are in good health, and join me in love to you.

I am ever, my dear Frank,

Your truly affectionate father,

JOHN HORNER.

### LETTER IX. TO HIS FATHER.

My dear Father, Shacklewell, 10th October, 1796.

I should have answered your last before this date, had I not been led on from day to day in considering the plan which you have proposed ; while my inclination and wishes towards home continually opposed my belief in its utility and advantage. For I must own, indeed, that I have long thought of it myself, and have frequently been on the point of writing to you on the subject. Mr. Hewlett also mentioned it to me some time ago, as affording a

* James Reddie, Esq., an advocate at the Scotch bar, who some years afterwards was appointed Legal Assessor to the city of Glasgow. He is the author of "*Inquiries, elementary and historical, in the Science of Law*," published in 1840. — ED.

1796. Æt. 19. prospect not only of confirming and correcting what I had already acquired of the English accent, but even of acquiring what was likely to remain with me after returning to Scotland. You will judge what satisfaction it gives me, that the proposal has first come from yourself. It is, however, with the greatest regret and disappointment that I relinquish my hopes of soon finding myself under your roof, and among those who are dear to me; and it will, I think, be more than ever incumbent on them to keep up a constant correspondence with me, the only means of filling up any part of the want which I feel. I am afraid my mother has forgotten me, so long is it since I had any letter from her.

Another objection, that of expense, which I considered greater than any arising from the gratification of my own feelings, you have removed, by desiring me not to consider it. I had an idea, also, that three years' attendance on the Law Classes were required at passing the trials; but Mr. Reddie informs me that two years are the number necessary; even those not being rigorously exacted, if application is known to have been given. He has written me a very full account of the books proper for me to read during the ensuing winter, as well as a plan for reading them. Independent of this, I am extremely happy at the opportunity you have given me of beginning a correspondence with him: I make no doubt that, even through his singular modesty, you have already perceived the talents and science which he possesses above all I have ever known.

With love to my dear mother, my aunt, and all friends, believe me, my dear father,

Your truly affectionate and dutiful son,

FRA. HORNER.

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LETTER X. TO HIS MOTHER.

My dearest Mother, Shacklewell, 13th October, 1796.

Though my letter must before this have reached my father, yet I am too glad of the opportunity which you have given me of writing to you to let it pass. Indeed, when I look at the date of your last, I am grieved that you should have suffered such an interval in our correspondence.

You have the goodness to regret the delay of my return. Believe me, it has been to me a very great disappointment. I had long been looking forward to our meeting, and enjoyed beforehand the gladness which I should give as well as receive; and formed a thousand expectations, a thousand plans. It is true I am as comfortable in my present situation as, in such, I could either expect or wish; but I have known the happiness of living with my parents and my own family, among those whom I love above all the world, and who, I am sure, are fondest of me. Yet, my dear mother, it would be a criminal want of gratitude to my father,—it would be real insensibility to the wonderful bounty with which he promotes my welfare in every point, did I not labour as far as it is possible for me to render his plans successful, and take as much of the advantage he intends me as I can reach. I considered it as my duty, therefore, to accept of his generous proposal; and endeavour to overcome my regret by still anticipating, though from so great a distance, the period of returning to my home.

Let me hear from you soon, and give me a particular account of all friends.

I remain, my dear mother,

Your affectionate son,

FRA. HORNER.

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LETTER XI. FROM HIS MOTHER.

My dear Frank, Edinburgh, 19th October, 1796.

I need not tell you that your affectionate letter gave me pleasure, though at the same time it hurts me to hear you say that I had so long neglected writing to you, which I really did not intend; but I had once and again proposed writing at the very time your father meant to do it, and as I thought you would consider him and me the same person, it made me yield, as I knew he had something to say to you in regard to your future plans, which he understands better than I do. After all, you rogue, I have a notion you are in my debt; but I do not dispute it with you, and shall in future be more punctual. It is no small disappointment to us all your remaining in London, but we hope it is for your good.

You, and all of you, are most particularly fortunate in a most indulgent father, who, instead of having occasion to be prompted, is willing to deny himself, in many instances, that his wife and children may enjoy the more; and I hope and trust that all of you will amply repay his goodness, by being grateful and attentive, should it please God to spare you and him together. I bless God we have no reason to complain. May the example of our eldest descend to our younger branches. I shall ever use my endeavour to promote their imitation.

And don't consider it, my dear, as the cant of an old woman, when I admonish you, above all things, not to neglect your religious duties. I would much rather see you a good than a great man, and it is no uncommon thing for learned men to forget what is the most material part of their duty; but *remember*,

if you do not remember your Creator in the days of your youth, you need never look for comfort in your old age. I say no more; you know your duty, and I hope will not reject the advice of one who has no other motive but your good. We are all in good health. I intended to send you a long letter about family concerns, but my paper will not admit of it. 1796. Æt. 19.

Farewell, my dear! May health and happiness attend you, wherever you are.

I remain

Your ever affectionate mother,

JOANNA HORNER.

LETTER XII. TO HIS FATHER.

My dear Father, Shacklewell, 15th November, 1796.

I write to acknowledge the receipt of your letter to Mr. Hewlett yesterday, and to return my thanks for the fresh marks of your kindness. I owe the same to my mother's last letter; trusting that I shall ever keep in mind the excellent advices and injunctions she has given me.

I have now entered on the study of the civil law, having begun it with a view of the History of Roman Jurisprudence: as yet I can give little credit to the opinion of those who call it a dry and uninteresting study; on the contrary, I find it very interesting, and am inclined to attribute those notions to the defect of connecting it with, or rather founding it on, the principles of general knowledge. You already know the advantages I supposed myself to have derived from the literary societies at Edinburgh, merely from the opportunity they give of practice in speaking; independent of the emulation and ardour they produce

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with regard to the acquisition of knowledge. The loss of the first of these is the only reason of the kind that makes me regret my absence; but I have formed a plan of remedying in some small degree this inconvenience, to which I propose strictly persevering through the winter, and that is by composition on supposed cases of law, much after the manner of Quinctilian's declamations. This may accustom me to the forms of rhetorical composition, may give me an habitual readiness, and will, at all events, exercise me in English style. How far I find this plan to be attended with success, I will take care to inform you.

With duty and love to my dear mother, my aunt, and all friends, I remain,

My honoured father,
Your truly affectionate son,
FRA. HORNER.

### LETTER XIII. TO MR. J. A. MURRAY.

Shacklewell, 26th November, 1796.

In truth, my dear Murray, you are either very indolent or very malicious. After a repose of two whole months, to put me off with half a letter, when the direction had flattered me with the expectation of a long one, is what I am unable to excuse, and you, I hope, unwilling to justify. I begin therefore at the very top of the sheet, that I may either return you evil or good for having left one half unsullied; I cannot use Voltaire's foul word, *unfouled.*

The first object which I have proposed to myself, in the study of civil law, is the History of Roman Jurisprudence: not to pursue the subject through all its branches, nor into the disputed or obscure points

of it; but to form such a general idea as may facilitate and enliven the study of the elements. For which purpose I have been reading the History of Heineccius. I wish to accompany this with the study of the Institutes, but have not yet been able to meet with the text book of Heineccius. My copy of the *Corpus Juris* is the octavo of Amsterdam; I bought it, and paid well for it, before I heard of the other with notes; nor do I regret it. The less one reads, the more time we have to read it well, though this will not apply with much propriety even to the copy without notes. As often as I see the book, I almost tremble; and whenever I open into the Pandects, I think of the descent of Æneas into hell. 1796. Æt. 19.

* * *

*Vestibulum ante ipsum, primisque in faucibus Orci.*

You know the rest. I have no doubt, however, by help of a little arrangement, generalising, and connecting it with other subjects, particularly politics and the philosophy of the human mind, to make it an interesting study.

I am happy that you are attending Stewart; and have no doubt of the pleasure you receive. With regard to what you mention, I think I recollect having been sensible of something of the same kind, but am not at present satisfied that it is really a fault. The business of all philosophy is to explain effects or events which take place before us; and to us it is not more important to know the motions of a planet, perhaps not so important, as to see the mutual dependence and conjunction of things that are familiar to us. This has still greater truth in the science of mind; for it is only conversant with objects that are about us, and in us, and continually with us, and we must lay aside the familiarity with which we treat

1796. Æt. 19. them in common, when we come to explain their circumstances in a philosophical view,—when we attribute them to their causes, or their general laws. I dare say you have by this time read Mr. Stewart's book. It contains some admirable morsels: the preliminary view of science; the digressions on habit; those on the fine arts, under the article Imagination; to which I will add the section on Dreaming, though I by no means agree with his conclusions; on the contrary, think them founded on hypothesis: yet it is an excellent specimen of the *manner* of analysing any subject in metaphysics, and, notwithstanding the objections of his having had hints of it elsewhere, truly original. But what I liked most in the *lectures* of Stewart was the view he gives, and constantly impresses, of the laws and manner of philosophical inquiry. To a person attending Stewart, I think only one caution would be at all necessary; and that is, to remember that the investigation of truth must be uninfluenced by the *ipse dixit* of any man, or any set of men whatever. Be so good as to inform me whether he continues to give out subjects of essays, and whether he has opened his class for political philosophy. I intended to enter on the subject of the disputation; but as that is now impracticable, I shall only require you to write to me on that or any other subject which occurs before a week elapses.

Yours, with the warmest affection,

FRA. HORNER.

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LETTER XIV. TO MR. J. A. MURRAY.

Shacklewell, 18th Dec. 1796.

I shall begin, my dear Murray, with what you say of Junius; on which subject I think there has been some mistake; as I do not remember having ever said, or having ever been told, that the letter to the Duke of Bedford, or any other of his letters, was faultless. On the contrary, I have just looked over that letter, and think it by no means a finished composition; and as I should wish to compare my ideas on it with yours, be so good as specify in your next the criticisms which occurred to you and my friend Brougham.

Junius was one of the authors which Mr. Hewlett pointed out to me as a model of English writing; but one of the chief *rules* which Mr. Hewlett pointed out to me was, to imitate no particular style whatever. We never have examined the style of Junius together with much attention, as it was rather my object to be made acquainted with the faults which writers, particularly those of Scotland, are apt to fall into; a person's own taste must direct him to the beauties of composition. In attempting to appreciate the style of an author, we must ever, I think, keep in view the particular subject on which it is employed; as none can be called masters of style who cannot accommodate their style to their subject, and vary the character of the one as soon as the other is changed. Keeping this in mind, I conceive that were I to write political invective and satire, I should aspire to the style of Junius. His great excellence seems to consist in *pointing* whatever he says; nor is this by any

1796. Æt. 19. means confined to the expression, as is the case with Seneca and Montaigne, but breaks out frequently in the sentiment. Hence the different effect which these styles produce. In reading the Philosophers, their smart, pointed sentences, generally puzzle for a few seconds, and when understood bring the author into our memory: those of Junius strike like lightning—φλοξ ωρανια; and nothing is before us but the illuminated object. Such at least is the case with myself; and the statement of one's feelings may be a good criterion of the effect, though it gives but little assistance to an analysis of the circumstances by which that effect has been produced. Another excellence of Junius, though nearly connected with the preceding, is the distinct, or rather (if you will allow me to use the word) the glaring manner, in which he exhibits any striking idea that comes into the course of his reflections;—one of the first qualifications of style, as I am inclined to believe. It certainly must result, in a great measure, from an original strength of imagination; but may be much cultivated by attending to the selection and combination of impressive circumstances.

These are the remarks which occur to me at present on the subject of Junius; more, I suppose, might be found if I had time to wait for it. As the most favourable specimens, I should select the first letter; the seventh letter, to Sir W. Draper; the thirty-fifth letter, to the King; and the concluding paragraph of the twenty-third letter, to the Duke of Bedford, will illustrate the two excellences which I have endeavoured to point out. I hinted that were I to choose subjects such as those of Junius, Junius should be my model for style: let me add, that I would endeavour to graft those two excellences on the rapid

and impetuous fluency of Bolingbroke: in this quality Junius appears deficient. 1796. Æt. 19.

From the style of Junius, it is neither an abrupt nor an unnecessary transition to add something with respect to his subject. I shall not enter upon the question with regard to the supposed author; though I have lately heard them ascribed to one different from those whose names had been before *emblazoned* with the dead; I mean the late Lord Chatham. The conjecture receives much more support from internal evidence than from any direct proof that I have heard. Whoever the author was, he is to be detested, both from the motives and the manner of his publication; for however strongly I lean to the general spirit of freedom which runs through them, I am convinced that those principles are often, as well as in the present case, assumed only to serve the purposes of faction: the matter of concealment puts him in no better character than that of a nocturnal assassin. His attack upon some illustrious men of that day,—his attack upon the most illustrious man of that day, perhaps of any day, your great relation, Lord Mansfield, will never be forgiven by posterity; and will only be forgotten amidst that reverence which has already begun to accumulate.

There is no subject in the Philosophy of the Human Mind more perplexing, at least I have found none more so, than that of the *will*. This does not, perhaps, arise from any peculiarity in the subject itself; but from the language which has been employed about it, and the hypotheses which the metaphysicians have framed to explain it. As popular language was constructed for purposes very different from science, our inquiries into the human mind have to struggle

1796. Æt. 19. against difficulties which are not experienced in other branches of philosophy. And this part of them the most: in consequence of the jargon which has been heaped up from age to age by the disputants about Liberty and Necessity. — You ask me to define *will:* it cannot be done: nor can you define memory, conception, or any one operation of the mind. You can only describe them by their effects. I am conscious of possessing a power over the train of my thoughts, I can detain a particular idea before my mind—farther, I find, that I possess a power of moving in a variety of attitudes the limbs of my body: these powers we call the will. Reflect on any one instance of the kind, and your consciousness will in one moment tell you all that you can ever know about the nature of the *will.* Observe, however, that there is a grammatical distinction betwixt the words *will* and volition; according to the analogy of language, *volition* expresses an act of the *will*..... To speak of *controuling the will,* is to speak ambiguously. One volition may counteract another: we may *will* to acquire certain habits of volition: to direct our will to certain objects. But to say that the will can controul the will would evidently be absurd. To relieve myself from this dry discussion, I cannot resist calling to mind a story, which produced a smile when it was first told me. A certain systematic glutton, which is no uncommon character among the citizens of London, had for years regularly regaled at a pastry-cook's shop, which, in the course of his business, he passed every day of his life. Once, however, he bethought himself that there was something in this practice not altogether commendable, and his reflections concluded in a resolution to get the better of his bad habit. The time for experiment was not far distant, and next day, assuredly, he did get

beyond the door of the cook's shop. But immediately, like a dear mother to her darling, "*Now*," says he (addressing his stomach), "*Now I have disappointed you, and now I'll indulge you.*" He turned, and had his usual allowance.—On the laws of volition, I shall not attempt to say any thing, but beg of you to enter upon it as a subject of investigation: it opens a wide field, in which little or nothing has been done. You will then be able to bring the difficulty, of the case which you adduce, to an issue betwixt Stewart and common language. There must be *some* connection between the will and the act of shutting the eyelids, as, after a few trials, I can prevent the winking, whatever objects be made to move before them: here the laws of *habit* come into consideration. Some physiologists, at the head of whom is Stahl, assert, that the act of twinkling the eye was at first effected by an act of the *will;* and they even extend this to all the internal motions of the animal frame, such as the circulation, the secretions, and the motions of the stomach. Others, particularly the ingenious Darwin, contend, that these vital motions are produced entirely and originally by the stimulus of objects external to the organ of motion; and he, reciprocally, extends his theory to the muscular motions first mentioned, allowing, however, that the will may in time acquire a power of repeating them. Hitherto, these matters have been wholly hypothetical; but they appear to be perfectly capable of rigorous investigation.

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I am not aware of the extent of your objection to Stewart's definition of Conception: that, however, you will enlarge on in your next. At present, I shall barely state some objections which I have had to it. In the first place, I think, he ought to have included not only past perceptions and sensations, but likewise

1796. Æt. 19. those combinations of our past perceptions and sensations which are formed by the power of imagination. You may understand me by an example—

> "And from the bosom of yon dropping cloud,
> While music wakes around, veil'd in a shower
> Of shadowing roses, on our plains descend."

No doubt, the three or four different perceptions, which compose this delightful image, separately arose to the memory of the poet, and separately exercised his power of conception; but after he combined them together, they must again have exercised his conception, again presented themselves before his mind's eye, not successively as before, but in one glowing picture. —I might likewise object to Stewart's account of conception, that in his philosophy we hear nothing of the faculty by which the mind apprehends, or (as the English idiom warrants us to say) *conceives* general truths; nor do we hear any thing of the conceptions which the mind forms of moral and intellectual objects, particularly character, for I cannot but think there is something analogous between the power which enables me to follow Thomson through the enchantments of his imagination, and that by which I form a distinct and permanent conception of the characters of Hector, of King Lear, of Falstaff, of Madame Roland. I bring this last into the company of fictitious beings, because even the great powers of fiction have produced nothing superior to the exalted, or rather sublime, character of this illustrious woman.

And now, my dear Murray, let me bestow my thanks for the opportunity you have given me of reviving these matters in my memory, and of calling on you for remarks on the different subjects. Let me express my willingness, my eagerness to enter upon

the plan of correspondence which you have sketched, and which I foresee, if carried into execution with ardour, will contribute to our improvement as well as pleasure. 1797. Æt. 19.

I am happy to hear your mother continues in health, and thank her for inquiring after me. I often think, I assure you, of the pleasant days I used to pass at Murrayfield; and often reflect, with lively, though indeed inadequate gratitude, of the kindness I have received from your family. Tell Mrs. Murray that this is the case; I am anxious she should know it: as she once treated me with kindness, which I construed into regard, I should anxiously wish to preserve the esteem of so respectable a parent of the friend whom I love most. Be so good as also to remember me to your sister. Every time I come to the end of one of our letters, I feel just as if I were leaving your company. With the hopes, therefore, of soon meeting you again, let me for the present bid you farewell.

Affectionately yours,
FRA. HORNER.

### LETTER XV. TO HIS FATHER.

My dear Father, Shacklewell, 17th March, 1797.

This week I have had the pleasure of two letters from you.

I am happy that you think the late apprehensions, with respect to public affairs, exceed what the occasion could justify; indeed, the panic is now in a great measure worn off, I hope from no other cause than its being discovered to have been unfounded. Paper money still circulates without depreciation, and must

1797. Æt. 19. be found, in the mean time, a great relief to the market; for many reasons, especially the enlargement of the Bank discounts. All political reasonings point out the increase of paper currency as a most pernicious evil; but it is to be hoped, that matters may yet go on well, provided it be used only as a temporary expedient.

I am entirely of your opinion as to the propriety of supporting the Government of the country. Undoubtedly, within the few last years, violent attacks have been made upon the rights of the subject; but no one finds his comforts impaired, nor his property less secure: a circumstance which should make the constitution more estimable to us, showing that its spirit is such as to continue to be beneficial, even after its forms have been suspended. There are good grounds to expect that that suspension will be removed by parliament, when the necessity, real or imaginary, disappears. But surely no doubt, with respect to the existence of such necessity can make one hesitate a moment in declaring resistance to those who would subvert our Government: whether that be attempted in the way of hostile invasion, or proceed from the temerity of wrong-headed, if not criminal innovators, among ourselves. I know your anxiety, my dear father, with regard to the formation of my political notions. I am aware that it is of great consequence in the profession I am to follow; the daily business of which has a reference to politics, and one may even be called upon to take an active concern. When thinking upon this, I often look forward to a rule of conduct, which I hope no circumstances may ever induce me to abandon; and it is this, to connect myself with the exclusive interests of no political party whatever. A man's independence must be best

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preserved, and his duty to the public best performed, by attaching himself, not to any set of political characters, but to that system of measures which he believes most conducive to the public welfare. It seems a reasonable duty, at all times, rather to lean towards the ruling ministers; for no administration can act with the energy that it ought, unless it can trust to the countenance of respectable people. But I have long since imbibed an opinion (which, whenever it occurs, I find more strongly impressed upon me), that every form of government is to be valued in the proportion of its affinity to those principles of rational freedom, which impose no further restraints than the common security makes necessary, and establish nothing that can operate as a check upon the exertions of worth and talents.

I have thus, my dear father, given you a sort of confession of faith, which the anxiety of your last letter seemed to call for; and because, independently of that consideration, I feel that my happiness in life will depend much on possessing such a confidence with you as is incompatible with any reserve. I have laid open my sentiments, that you may know them, and that I may have the advantage of correcting them by your experience. To a person less entitled than you to be acquainted with them, all this would have been an useless parade.

I am glad to hear my mother has got the better of her cold; the weather here has for some time past made people very subject to them. Give my love to her, my aunt, and all friends. Believe me, my dear father,

Your very affectionate and dutiful son,

FRA. HORNER.

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LETTER XVI. TO HIS FATHER.

My dear Father, Shacklewell, 2d Sept. 1797.

In my last letter to you, I did not intend to have omitted to inform you that I visited Blenheim when in Oxfordshire. I was wonderfully pleased with it, though the badness of the weather, beside ladies being in company, prevented us from walking over the grounds. The view from the gate at Woodstock is uncommonly fine; I was not much struck with the house itself, but it contains a noble library, and such a collection of paintings, particularly the works of Rubens, that, for the first time perhaps, I felt mortified at my want of knowledge to appreciate their excellence, and want of taste to enjoy their beauties. In the apartments of the house we were shown some tapestry, that is remarkable both for the strength of colours and accuracy of the figures; it represents a series of Marlborough's victories, and, what seems odd, was all manufactured in France, soon after those victories were gained; no great proof of the extent of *amor patriæ* and jealousy of national honour among the people of modern times. On the whole, Blenheim is certainly a noble monument of gratitude raised by the country to one who gave splendour to its reputation; and though we should feel more inclined to go along with that gratitude, had its object been some illustrious improvement in the arts of peace, yet we cannot help falling in with the common sentiments of men in attributing a sort of superior lustre to military glory, which dazzles us in spite of ourselves, and induces us to forget (in defiance of reflection to the contrary) that it has been the scourge of the earth.

Nothing has given me more pleasure than to hear,

by your account, that the application of my brother John to business so fully answers my hopes and expectations. I expected it from his good understanding and dispositions; and it is the hope on which I am most accustomed to dwell, that we may all grow up round you and my mother with sentiments of active probity, and a spirit of industry, so as never to give you cause to regret your care and your indulgence. I feel most sensibly how much our success will depend on having your example long before us, and long enjoying the benefits of your counsel and direction. I feel most sensibly how much my immediate comfort and enjoyment depend on these, in the impatience with which I look forward to my return home, and to the prospect of coming again to domestic society and its duties, after having been absent so long, and felt by experience what a blank they leave in life. 1797. Æt. 20.

Your dutiful and affectionate son,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER XVII. TO MR. J. A. MURRAY.

Shacklewell, 24th October, 1797.

A few more lines, my dearest friend, to make my peace for unpardonable transgression, and then we shall have done with correspondence,—this imperfect substitute for personal intercourse and conversation. Had we been living within a few streets of each other, as once we did, and shall again in a few days, you (I suppose) in George Street, I in Park Place, how many days in the week should we have let pass without seeing one another? Yet, if any thing, a letter may be written, folded, sealed, and

1797. Æt. 20. even sent to the post, in much less time than a visit could be made; and I have seen whole months die away in melancholy silence, and dreary solitude, not a sentence exchanged with my dear Murray, not a moment's intercourse with him,—were it not for those kind thoughts that are ever bringing you to my mind, associating you with my best and fondest recollections of former scenes, and joining you with every future prospect that my hopes are permitted to indulge.

Your description of those sensations, which constitute the uneasiness of metaphysical perplexity, is excellent; but will not apply, I hope, to our situation. Do you remember a comparison which Voltaire draws between a metaphysician and a minuet-dancer? All such sneers, however, could only have proceeded from persons acquainted with nothing but the abuses of the science, and cannot affect the prosecution of rational inquiries. While the world had no other system than the solid concentric spheres of the ancients, or the vortices of Des Cartes, it was common, and not unnatural, to deride the science of physical astronomy in itself. But all such general anathemas are best refuted, and that might be done even prior to the cultivation of a particular science, by remounting to what may be called the vantage ground of all knowledge, the primary consideration of the natural objects of study and inquiry, the limits within which investigation is to be prosecuted, and the powers by which it may be accomplished. How our metaphysical correspondence proved so abortive, at least failed of the perfect delivery which we looked for, we need the less trouble ourselves either to explain or regret, as we shall soon be situated much more favourably for the management of our inquiries. By conver-

sation, I think we could do more in an hour than by letter-writing for a month. You must have heard of the Edinburgh Academy of Physics*, and I hope belong to it. I think, in the course of the winter, we might prepare a few papers on the philosophy of the human mind for that institution. Let us be the Beaumont and Fletcher of metaphysics. 1797. Æt. 20.

I have written in great haste, which must at once be my fault and my excuse: if you cannot pardon the carelessness, force me to eat the paper's contents on Monday next, when, God willing, I shall see you.

Adieu.

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER XVIII. FROM THE REV. JOHN HEWLETT TO MR. HORNER, SENIOR.

Dear Sir, Shacklewell, 16th October, 1797.

I have the pleasure to inform you, in answer to the inquiries of your last letter, that the principal object for which your son came to England has been fully accomplished. He has certainly got rid of the Scottish accent and pronunciation, and acquired the English so completely as not to be distinguished from a native. I have not trusted to my own ear entirely on this subject, but have occasionally requested the opinion of some judicious friends, who have, without exception, concurred with me. The only requisites in which he appears deficient are a

* This society was instituted by Mr. Henry Brougham, in 1796, for the promotion of physical science. At the time of the formation of the Academy of Physics, an active correspondence appears to have taken place between Mr. Brougham and Mr. Horner as to its objects and plan, and the persons who were to be associated as members; and Mr. Horner, after his return to Edinburgh, took a prominent share in its proceedings.—ED.

1797. Æt. 20. clear and distinct enunciation, and a modulation of voice that should be easy, varied, and impressive, without stiffness or effort. These excellences in speaking depend a good deal on early habits and the organs of speech. Your son has made considerable progress in this respect since I had the pleasure of seeing you last; and, by habitual attention, I make no doubt but he will render his elocution as perfect as could be wished.

As to his general knowledge, it is more varied and extensive than I ever knew a young man possess of the same age. The talents necessary to acquire this must consequently be of the first kind; and though I have no doubt but that your son would make a distinguished figure in any profession, and in almost every department of literature, yet I think him particularly adapted to the study of the law. The basis of all excellence, strong natural good sense, he possesses in an eminent degree. To this he has added readiness, acuteness, and that degree of energy which, without being overbearing or presumptuous, is likely to give him consequence and superiority at the bar. Possessing such endowments, it must give you pleasure to know, that he evinced all the patience, perseverance, and fortitude that are necessary for surmounting the greatest difficulties. Were I to suggest a hint with respect to his future studies, it should be to guard him against desultory pursuits, and disquisitions in science not immediately connected with his profession. The avenues of nearly all the sciences are open to him; and he is acquainted with the nature and the relative importance of the different kinds of truth. This is the grand object; and when a young man has accomplished it, his powers ought to be concentrated, and directed to the particular profession

which he has adopted. I have just room to add, that I cannot but regret his absence from Shacklewell, because I shall lose an agreeable companion, and a confidential, affectionate friend. 1797. Æt. 20.

I am, dear Sir, your much obliged

JOHN HEWLETT.

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Soon after my brother's death, when a biographical memoir of him was in contemplation, I requested Mr. Hewlett to furnish me with such details as he could then call to mind relating to the character, habits, and studies of his pupil, while under his charge. He kindly complied with this request, and communicated to me the following particulars:—

"When Mr. F. Horner first came from Edinburgh, he had much of a Scotch accent; and to correct this was a principal motive of his coming to Shacklewell. As he soon discovered uncommon diligence and attention, as well as very superior abilities, I thought the shortest and most effectual way of succeeding was to analyse the Scottish pronunciation, and to point out, rather *broadly*, the difference between that and the English. It soon appeared that the whole consisted in the sound of the vowels, if we except the peculiar rhythm, or drawling accent, at the close of sentences; and as a vowel must occur in every word, and indeed in every syllable that is uttered, by teaching him the correct sound of the vowels in all their varieties, he so effectually corrected his Scottish accent, in six months, that no one would have supposed he was a native of North Britain.

"His habits were very diligent, and those of a severe student; but he joined with great ardour in such diversions as amused his fellow-students. He was

1797. Æt. 20. particularly fond of the game of fives, or balls; and this I encouraged by sometimes playing with him in a party myself, because I thought it would serve to distend his chest (which was rather narrow), and give him strength. He was delighted also to accompany me (which he often did) to the river Lea, where we frequently took a boat and rowed ourselves about for an hour or two, having for a constant attendant a fine large Newfoundland dog, called Caliban, who by his gambols, docility, and exploits in the water, greatly contributed to our amusement.

"As there was no occasion to doubt his diligence, or the correctness of his conduct, and as my house was rather crowded with pupils, Mr. Horner's father, rather than not put him under my care, consented to take rooms for him in a small house adjoining; and as there was not any pupil whom I could class with him, he pursued his studies alone, though under my particular directions in every thing essential; and I used sometimes to go to him in the middle of the day, or in the afternoon, and sometimes he came to me. In reading the classics, his judgment was so sound, that there was little danger of his mistaking a passage; and therefore my advice to him was, to read as much as he could; but to read it critically, and to understand it thoroughly. As I had not time to read *with him* one tenth part of what he could prepare in the course of the day, I desired him to mark all such passages as were attended with any difficulty, and then, when we met, our whole attention was directed to them. By this economical management of time, he read a vast deal more than would have been practicable on any other plan.

"He was a great, and at first an indiscriminate admirer, of Hume's style, and was rather surprised to

hear me say, that, with all its excellences, it abounded with Scotticisms and Gallicisms; but as I never met with a young man, who showed more docility, or a greater degree of deference and affection for his preceptor, he was desirous of sitting down with me, for the purpose of examining critically Hume's style. Accordingly we read a large portion of one volume; and he was so struck with the propriety and novelty of my observations, that he took notes of almost every thing that passed on that occasion; and perhaps they are still to be found among his papers, with many other remains of his studies while at Shacklewell. Indeed, it was his practice to make memoranda of every thing new or important that was communicated to him. The characters of his mind were a retentive memory, a clear and sound judgment, not confined to narrow tracts of literature and science, but embracing large and extensive views of both; bringing also to its just decision the events of history, the characters of nations and individuals, and, above all, the passing occurrences of the day, which, it should be remembered, were at that period awful, momentous, and alarming. He showed great sagacity in detecting fallacy and discovering truth, and had, in an eminent degree, the power of arranging his ideas with logical precision. 1797. Æt. 20.

"[Perceiving that the natural tendency of his mind led to the exercise of reason, rather than to the indulgence of fancy,—that he was particularly interested in discussing the merits of some specious theory, in exposing fallacies, and in forming legitimate inductions from any premises that were supposed to rest on the basis of truth,—but finding also that, from imitation and habit, he had been led to think too highly of those metaphysical speculations, which

1797. Æt. 20. abound in terms to which we annex no distinct ideas, and which often require the admission of principles, that are either unintelligible or incapable of proof, I recommended to his notice Euler's Algebra, as affording an admirable exercise of his reasoning powers, and as the best means of cultivating that talent for analysis, close investigation, and logical inference, which he possessed at an early period, and which he afterwards displayed in so eminent a degree. At the same time, I was of opinion that to translate a part of that excellent work from the French into English, when he wished to vary his studies, would improve his knowledge of both languages, and be the best introduction for him to the mathematics.

"He was soon delighted with this occasional employment, which seemed to supply his mind with food that was both solid and nutritious; and he generally produced, two or three times a week, as much as I could find time to revise and correct. In the course of the first twelvemonth, he had translated so large a portion of the two volumes, that it was determined to complete the whole, and to publish it for the benefit of English students; but he returned to Scotland before the translation was ready for the press, and therefore the labour of finishing and editing it necessarily devolved on me.

"I wished to give this short history of the translation at first; but he modestly, though at the same time resolutely opposed it, saying that whatever merit or emolument might be attached to the work, it belonged to me. The same proposal was made to him on publishing the second edition, but he still persisted in his former determination.

"From the pleasure and instruction which he received from Euler's Algebra, it was natural for him to

wish to know something more of the life and character of that profound mathematician. Having therefore in some measure satisfied his curiosity, and collected the necessary materials by consulting the ordinary sources of information, I advised him, by way of literary exercise, to draw up a biographical memoir on the subject. He readily complied with my wishes; and this may be considered as one of his earliest productions. Its merits would, in my opinion, do credit to any writer; and therefore, in appreciating them, the reader will not deem any apology necessary on account of the author's youth.] * 1797. Æt. 20.

" To have had some share in directing the studies, forming the judgment, and cultivating the taste of such a man as Francis Horner, at a very critical and interesting period, I shall always consider as one of the most gratifying circumstances of my life; and I may add, with great truth, that the pleasure of his society, and the cordiality of his friendship, were alone an ample compensation for all the time and labour I bestowed in superintending his studies and promoting his future welfare. He was never backward in showing his superior talents; but I never knew him on any occasion forward, presumptuous, or obtrusive. He gratified no contemptible vanity by making others feel their inferiority, nor indulged any triumph in argument for the sake of victory.

" His sweetness of temper, and the engaging affability of his manners, not only prevented him from having any quarrel, or serious difference with his fellow-pupils, but secured him the affection and good offices of all. In company he was cheerful, convivial,

* The paragraphs between brackets have been taken from the preface by Mr. Hewlett to a new edition of the Algebra, published some years after my brother's death.—Ed.

1797. Æt. 20. and entertaining; and on *one* occasion and one only, that of the breaking-up supper, he used to sing a song, which, as his voice and ear were good, he executed in a very pleasing manner.

"I never had occasion to enter into any serious remonstrance with him respecting his conduct but twice, and the result was a most ready, sincere, and affectionate compliance with my wishes and advice; though I am well assured that, on one of those occasions, his fortitude and sense of duty must have been put to the severest test."

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My brother was now to enter upon the special course of study required for the profession he had chosen; and as, according to the usual custom, he would be called to the bar in little more than two years from this time, he appears to have felt the full importance of allowing no part of the interval to be passed unprofitably. The following fragment of a plan of study, drawn up in anticipation of his return home, shows the deliberation with which he had been accustomed to regulate his occupations; and although we afterwards find many confessions of frailty, and many self-reproaches for having wandered from the great road he had marked out for himself, the by-paths he deviated into were seldom those of idleness: he was generally led away from his professional studies by the pursuit of some object of literature or science, the attractions of which he had not firmness to resist. If this scheme partakes of the sanguine eagerness of youth, and is so vast as to be beyond the limits of that probability of accomplishment, within which it would have been restricted in more mature

years, it shows at least the ardour of his mind, the generous ambition with which he was inspired, and how early he had formed enlightened views respecting the profession of the law. 1797. Æt. 20.

"PLAN OF MY FUTURE STUDIES.

"*Shacklewell, October* 19. 1797.—Being now on the eve of my return to Edinburgh, in order to enter seriously on the study of the Scotch law, at the same time that I have very much to do in the branches of general science as well as in those of polite literature and erudition, it is proper for me, from this distance, to take a view of the prospect before me, that in the course of the journey which I am about to take, I may not find myself entirely ignorant of the best route, or at a loss with respect to the relative position of the different places.

"It ought to be the main object of my ambition, and the point of tendency for all the thoughts, exertions, and labours of my life, to become a consummate lawyer, both in practice and in science. The former is to be acquired only in actual employment, and by the exercise of sensible and well-directed observation, when I myself shall be engaged in business. The latter, the knowledge of the theory of law, may surely be acquired to a very considerable degree in the time that I have; though indeed that is now so short, that none of it must be lost. It was a noble spirit in Cicero to wish and to resolve to advance to the forum at first with the sure possession of surpassing learning and eloquence. In the two years that remain to me, I must perfect myself in the Latin and Greek classics, acquire an elegance and facility of English

1797. Æt. 20. style, both in writing and in speaking, make myself a proficient in the general principles of philosophy, and a complete master, if possible, of law as a science. This is the ground I have to go over, this is the height I must climb up to; without which I cannot pretend to be fit for my profession. Let me remember, however, that this, though a possible, is a great undertaking, and will require, on my part, that unremitted industry and attention, without which no honour can ever be deserved, and no true honour ever acquired. Joined to regular and continued habits of industry, my studies must be prosecuted likewise in a systematic manner, on a plan previously laid down, at least sketched, in its general outline. I have my own experience now to tell me, what I ought to have learnt from the precepts of others, that it is of the utmost importance to a student to limit the number of his books, and to resist with firmness every approach towards a habit of desultory reading. *It will be well for me to bear this in mind in the course of the ensuing winter.* I ought to confine myself to a selection of the best authors: read others certainly, but not till the best have been thoroughly perused and resolutely investigated. In Greek, for the present, I need only fix my thoughts on *Homer*, *Demosthenes*, *Xenophon*, and *Euripides;* Euripides, as a master in describing and imitating the human passions; Xenophon, for the sake of the philosophy and facts, as well as the composition; Demosthenes, as the greatest and most perfect model of eloquence for a British lawyer to study; and Homer as the fountain and original, so far as the world can ever know, of all that is divine in invention, or eloquent in composition; and to be farther studied, both as the historian of civil society at a particular stage of its progress,

and as an admirable delineator of general manners, and of the varieties of human character. In Latin, I may and must indulge myself in a greater range of authors; but still let those be only the best: the best historians, *Livy*, *Tacitus*, *Cæsar*, and *Sallust* — the best poets, *Virgil*, *Horace*, *Ovid*, *Lucretius*, and *Tibullus* — should be regularly read and intensely studied over and over again; but the works of Cicero, one and all of them, I should have continually in my hand, and almost learn by heart. In the ensuing winter, as my study of languages must necessarily be abridged, let me at least read daily, without failure on any pretence, one hundred lines in the Odyssey of Homer; and apply one hour at least to the orations and rhetorical works of Cicero. If this be accomplished properly and in good earnest, I should be ready at the close of the college term in April next, to go through all the authors, Greek and Latin, above enumerated. 1797. Æt. 20.

"In mathematical philosophy I have nothing to do with any attempts of my own at original investigation: I should be thoroughly acquainted with the history of pure mathematics, and comprehend, with scientific distinctness of arrangement, the metaphysic-rationale, or logic of analysis, both geometrical and algebraic. In the mixed mathematics, and the other branches of physics, including chemistry, botany, and natural history, I am to read the book of nature, and should be familiarly acquainted with all the laws of the material world hitherto discovered, and likewise with the most striking experiments and simplest reasonings by which they have been ascertained, illustrated, or explained.

"As for metaphysics; it is only on a complete and scientific knowledge of the principles of human nature

1797. Æt. 20. and the theory of morals, that the path is laid towards the elements of legislative science: and it is from the stores of practical morality, accumulated as they have been by the sages of ancient and modern times, that the practical lawyer, who aims at eloquence in his pleadings, should seek those simple and direct appeals to the understanding and to the heart, which are at once the most commendable and the most effectual persuasives.

"But next to the immediate study of the civil, municipal, and statute laws themselves, my great object of acquisition must be the general science of politics, legislation, and jurisprudence, as systematised by reasonings and illustrated by history. I shall not enter at present into a discussion of the plan on which this study should be prosecuted, but concluding for the present these general observations, shall apply them to the particular course of six months' study which I am just about to commence.

"Law being now my great and ultimate object of application, that to which all other studies must have a subservient reference, I begin with considering it first. In this ensuing winter I am to attend the class for the institutes; those institutes, therefore, I must make myself complete master of before the end of the session. For this purpose I must study both Heineccius and Vinnius; and it seems to me that it would be better to go on with both at the same time, thereby prosecuting my reading in the order of the titles or subjects. My progress in the institutes, and in the commentaries, will depend on the progress of the lecture, but it will be absolutely necessary to comprehend fully and thoroughly every thing as I go on; nor need I do otherwise, when my friends Murray, Brougham, &c., have gone over the course before me, and will be able to

afford me every assistance. It will be proper to have a law common-place book, divided according to the titles of the institutes, for the purpose of preserving whatever remarks or criticisms, queries, quærenda, &c. may occur to me in the course of study; and it would be an excellent, as it is a necessary exercise, to get into the habit of throwing out such notes in Latin. Besides what I read of the institutes and the commentaries, I must daily make some progress in the knowledge of Roman antiquities, as compiled by Heineccius and Adam; and of Roman law history, as composed by Gravina. I must likewise endeavour, in the course of the winter, to get through Montesquieu and Smith. If I can procure a good translation, either in Latin or in French, of the antiquities of Rome, by *Dionysius Halic.*, it would be an excellent companion to the rest; but let it be carefully and faithfully remembered by me, that these books are not to be read merely, but studied, and *that* in regular succession; my progress in law, as well as my general criticisms on manners, &c., being duly registered every day in my journal of reading. 1797. Æt. 20.

"It will be proper to compose all my essays and disquisitions for literary societies on subjects of general law and politics. In the composition of each, I should aim at an accuracy and extent of research, a plain, neat, elegant, flowing, didactic style as to the language, and pay particular attention to the beauties of method and arrangement.

"Let me here attempt a sketch of what ought to be the professional knowledge of a lawyer. His main object is to be acquainted thoroughly with the institutions and laws of his country, as his business is to interpret them for the use of others, and to be the organ of that right, which law confers on individuals,

1797. Æt. 20. of directing the executive power in matters of private concern. This being the case, he ought to beware of being misled by a philosophical turn of mind into too great a fondness for theoretical discussion. This I do not say, however, as if I supposed it at all necessary to limit or confine the study of law as a science, but only that study may be put under proper regulations. A lawyer ought undoubtedly to be acquainted, and thoroughly acquainted, with what law *ought to be*, according to the natural principles of equity and freedom, but his practical business is to know what law *is* in his own particular country. It is from a confused notion, or a total ignorance, of this just distinction, that some lawyers have wasted their talents and their time on mere theory and general speculation, while others drudge on, the mechanical creatures of mere erudition and memory, without entering farther into the spirit of legislative history than the chronology of dates, and unable to give any other reason for the existence . . . . ."

(*The rest of this paper was not found.*)

### Letter XIX. TO THE REV. JOHN HEWLETT.

My dear Sir, Edinburgh, 2d November, 1797.

I should have given you intelligence of my arrival sooner than this, but was not able to procure a frank. I got home sound and safe on Monday morning, after a journey that was tolerably agreeable, notwithstanding a sharp frost on the two last nights, and companions who were rather stupid during the day, and more than drowsy through the night. I spent one day at York, where though on the whole a dull town, I was much gratified with the minster, a

very beautiful and noble pile; and with the castle, the county jail, which is so airy and well situated, and the prisoners so comfortably accommodated that should I ever be laid in limbo, I should long to be quartered there.—"*Nescia mens hominis fati sortisque futuræ.*" After having mentioned York Castle with such a comment, I was not at liberty to conclude it without *tritical* authority. 1797. Æt. 20.

Remember me kindly to Mrs. Hewlett, for whom I shall ever feel a sincere and high regard. I do not pretend to offer her any professed acknowledgments, because I am sensible, that no return on my part can ever repay the attention and kindness which I so long experienced from her.

The business at college is not seriously entered upon; beside the civil law lectures, which have not yet opened, I propose to go through a course of chemistry and natural philosophy; on the former subject I have just begun the elementary treatise of your friend Nicholson, which is recommended by Dr. Black. Unfortunately for me, that great man has finally resigned his academical chair; and the university has sustained a loss which cannot soon be replaced. In about a fortnight, I shall be completely engaged, and have a prospect of passing the winter in full employment. I shall from time to time do myself the pleasure of troubling you with letters, and I please myself with the expectation of having my labours in Justinian, Newton, and Lavoisier, agreeably relieved by your communications. Remember me to all round the fireside at Shacklewell;

And believe me, dear Sir,

Yours with sincerest affection,

FRA. HORNER.

1797. Æt. 20. Soon after his return to Edinburgh, Mr. Horner became a member of the Speculative Society, an association formed in 1764, by students of the University, for the discussion, by written essays and debates, of questions on history, politics, legislation, and general literature. It meets, under the sanction of the Senatus Academicus, in a hall appropriated to it in the University buildings, and holds its sittings once a week, in the evening, during the winter session, that is, from November to May. Many of the most distinguished men who have been educated at Edinburgh have belonged to it; and many of the members who reside there continue to attend the meetings, and to take an interest in the proceedings of the society, long after they have ceased to be students.

On the 14th of November 1797, at an ordinary meeting, petitions for admission as members were presented from Francis Horner and Henry Brougham; and on the 21st of the same month they were admitted. Mr. Horner took a great interest in the society, and soon became a leading member in all the literary business. He was so regular in his attendance, that for three years, as appears by the minute book, he was only absent from three meetings, and during the two last of these years he was one of the presidents.*

Being now settled at home, and living in the

* "The society is not to be viewed as a temporary club, but an academical institution of permanent establishment; an institution not only felt, by those who now address you, as affording means of improvement that we cannot elsewhere command, but acknowledged by those of our predecessors, whom we most aspire to emulate, as having contributed much to their own attainments in literature and in eloquence."—*Extract from an Address to the Members of the Society, dated 26th February*, 1799, *and signed*—

William Fullarton
Henry Brougham
Francis Horner
Charles Kinnaird
} *Presidents.*

society of his most intimate friends, he had seldom occasion to correspond with them, for a considerable time. The absence of letters is in some degree made up by a journal of his reading, which he began to keep in the spring of 1798 ; and although it is not carried on very regularly, it is sufficiently so to enable us, with the help of occasional correspondence, to trace his course of life, and the developement of his character and opinions during a period of nearly five years.

1798. Æt. 20.

JOURNAL. "*May* 1.—This morning I began a course of French with M. Deville. I have already acquired considerable facility in reading that language, but it is the mechanical facility of habit; I have never studied it grammatically, and I can neither speak nor write French. These I propose to attain, in the course of the present summer. Among other exercises, I intend to make all my notes on French books in that language, as well as all the abstracts I may draw up of such.

"I began the 44th chapter of Gibbon's history, which contains an abstract of Roman jurisprudence, and may therefore serve as an introduction to that course of civil law which I have laid out as the principal business for this summer. This chapter I hope to finish in three or four days, after I have critically examined it, consulted the leading authorities, and made a short abstract. I next propose to study the small historical treatise of Arthur Duck, which, with Montesquieu's philosophical treatise on the Roman History, will qualify me sufficiently for proceeding to the study of the Institutes of Justinian.

"*May* 3.—Continued the perusal of Gibbon's 44th

1798. Æt. 20. chapter, but read only *three* pages; for the plausibility of his conjecture, with respect to the origin of the expression *res mancipi*, led me into a minute examination of it, and the whole morning stole away in ransacking Heineccius and Brissonius, and then writing out the result of my inquiries. I feel ideas accumulating for the composition of a history of Roman law and government, on the plan of Bailly's 'History of Astronomy.'

"Examined, with critical attention, a paragraph in Chesterfield's 142d letter, and practised the exercise, recommended by Blair, of transcribing from memory. The main purpose of this is to make myself intimately acquainted with the pure idioms of English, and, if possible, to acquire a habit of that easy polite turn of expression which throws such a charm over conversation as well as composition. But it will likewise, I hope, be attended with the subordinate effects of strengthening both my memory and attention. I have hitherto been in the practice of noting down such expressions and idioms as pleased me; but this, I am now persuaded, overloads, perplexes, and enfeebles the powers of remembrance.

"Translated four maxims out of Rochefoucault.

"*May* 4.—Read to the end of Gibbon's 44th chapter. To-morrow I propose to begin a second perusal, and draw up an abstract. Read over, but in a hasty manner, and rather as an exercise in French, the first book of the Memoirs of Cardinal de Retz; to-morrow I must revise it with minute care.

"*May* 5.—Reviewed the first, or historical, part of Gibbon's 44th chapter. It contains a very tolerable deduction of the progress of Roman legislation, interspersed with some excellent remarks. The account of the succession of civilians is handled in a very

finished and interesting manner. But the whole is corrupted by the *dulcia vitia* of his style; and for the sake of telling his story in a round-about way, he leaves it a perplexing problem to his readers, to discover from his text alone (p. 354.) that the Sabinians were the followers of Capito, and the Proculians of Labeo.* 1798. Æt. 20.

"*May* 7.—After a day spent in agreeable idleness with my friend Murray, who is about to set off for London, I returned to my studies, and began *Duck*, 'De Usu et Auctoritate, &c.' A miracle indeed! that this small 12mo. should be the offspring of forty years' study of civil law, and of all the commentators diligently perused. Read only the two first chapters of the first book; got no information from them whatever, and exhausted my disgust in a criticism upon both;—See my *Notes*."

### Letter XX. TO MR. MURRAY.

Dear Murray, Edinburgh, 25th June, 1798.

Your last letter pleased me very much, because not having deserved it, I did not look for a second so soon. It is much better for yourself to take as much of England as you can; there are several of your friends here, and I one of them, who have thought it from the first a much better plan that you should delay your trials till next session. Besides, I shall have the pleasure of passing them about the same time, if I can keep fagging at Justinian as I have done for some little time past: as we have travelled so long together, even from old Stalker† and the

* Quarto edition of 1788.

† Master of an elementary school.

1798. redoubted Nicol, *passibus æquis*, I should feel mor-
Æt. 20. tified, and fancy a sort of separation if you were to put on *the robe of office* much before me.

As you are not to be down immediately, I wish you would write to me some particulars of the observations that have fallen in your way with regard to the subject for which you chiefly went up. You have read de Retz, I am sure, with pleasure; and I make no doubt with advantage also. It is one of those few precious books which I find the most difficult to read; for a few pages supply materials on which hours may be employed. I will instance the passage I was reading last, towards the beginning of the second book, containing a rapid but admirable view of the French Monarchy from Louis IX. to the regency, concluding with portraits of Richelieu and Mazarin. What I want you to share with me especially, are the applications you find in real life, illustrative of De Retz's maxims. They should only be used as a commentary on what passes under our own observation.

Since you went away, I have not done much in the way of study—a little civil law, a little chemistry, and a little of something else for which I have not a distinct name, being a mixture of *belles lettres* and *connoissance du monde*, extracted from Chesterfield, De Retz, and Condillac. The weather has for a long time been uncommonly fine, not at all favourable to poring or prosing at home. I am at last in the ranks*, and am kept now to close attendance, as our noble and valiant major has even threatened his resignation, unless the corps improves in that particular.

* The first regiment of Edinburgh Volunteer Infantry.

1798.
ÆT. 20.

I hope you heard the debate on the Militia business, the only thing like a debate which has occurred during your stay. Fox, I understand, is to be in the House on Friday next; and for *your* sake I wish the gout may permit attendance to the gentleman on the other side of the red box—*par nobile fratrum!* as a certain biographer would opine, and which you may travestie as you were wont. By the bye, you may see that same botcher of Lord Mansfield's life any Sunday at the Foundling.

Faithfully yours,

FRA. HORNER.

JOURNAL. "*July* 6.—I have lately been attending some important pleadings before our Court of Session, on what is called the Bargeny cause; not so much from any interest in the legal discussion, to which I cannot as yet pretend, as with a view to learn what style of oratory it ought to be my ambition to acquire. In order to be a barrister of *any* eminence, I can perceive that two requisites are indispensable; in the first place, an accurate and comprehensive acquaintance with all the points of law which, in the discussion of any cause, may be brought into the argument; and secondly, the talent of detailing the narrative and arguments of a speech in that distinct order which most properly belongs to them, so that every hearer may not only be enabled to follow them as the speaker goes along, but likewise to preserve a clear recollection of the arrangement of all that has preceded. These two points, I apprehend, are absolutely essential to success in pleading at the bar. With respect to the former, I conceive that a knowledge of the doctrines and decisions of law from

1798. Æt. 20. memory alone, however copious and ready, will not be enough. They must be systematised in the head; the forcible and recognised principles of each doctrine, and the scientific history of each decision, so accurately and so clearly known that each may be produced in proper perspicuous language, as soon as wanted. And what is more, whenever these reasons and principles are introduced into the argument of any pleading, they should be made all to bear upon the point at issue, and contribute to render the whole arrangement more finished and more luminous. As for the second article, *method*, by far the most important as well as most difficult among the branches of rhetorical study, I shall not stop on it at present. I have often reflected on it; I have read many satisfactory observations in Cicero, Quinctilian, and Condillac. But it still remains a desideratum in my education, and I am afraid it will be long ere I shall acquire the habit of realising, in the practice either of writing or speaking, the views I have got, and have still to get on this subject.

"A barrister ought to have all his knowledge and all his talents so ready, that he may at a moment's warning call them into service. This must prove of the first consequence. He should likewise form the habit of complete self-possession, a quality very different from that impudence which is the joke against all the profession, and justly reproached to too many: but I mean that command of temper, in every respect, which is necessary to keep command of the understanding. There are several embellishments which wonderfully set off pleadings at the bar: such as a happy introduction of hypothetical cases, bearing an analogy to that at issue; a successful reference to polite anecdotes and histories; a powerful appeal (in

the midst of a legal argument, and in support of it) to the passions of humanity, indignation, generosity, and honour, or to the emotions of ridicule and satire, according as circumstances demand. Such are the notions I have at present with respect to bar eloquence. I suspect they may be inaccurate, I know they are incomplete. But I cannot so well advance to others more complete and more accurate, as by stating, what I have, distinctly to myself; and it will be amusing at least, perhaps profitable, should I carry on this journal of my mind, to trace through a series of years the gradual developement of new ideas and successive correction of old. ...

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"I have lately been perusing the 'Lettres Persanes' of Montesquieu, and am arrived this day at Letter CXII. I read this chiefly as one of those books from which I am to derive some knowledge of the manners of the world. As to composition, Montesquieu is not a favourite with me. He indulges too much in epigram and conceit. He is indeed a very profound thinker, and his writings abound with comprehensive views. But, in consequence, perhaps, of this very genius for deep thought, all his writings appear to me like a string of maxims. There is no skill in composition and arrangement. But though he might prove a very pernicious model of writing, he is one of the first masters in the great art of reflection; and his works, if studied with the proper temper of criticism, would teach the true spirit of observing on the manners and characters of the world, at once with subtlety and sensibility; as indeed they would teach the true style of expressing such detached observations at once with precision and with beauty.

"To the journal of my studies, I propose to add the history of my character and mind, an enterprise of

1798. Æt. 20. some danger and much difficulty. Of all the danger into which I may fall, and of the difficulty which I shall have to encounter, the source is vanity and self-love. But it will be a trial of courage, and may prove an exercise of skill. It is said to be more difficult to dissect one's own character, than to sift those of other people; should I therefore even be worsted in my present attempt, I may hope at least to be in the end less unqualified for the other. But I see no reason to fear any failure, if I can only have the fortitude to speak the truth to myself."

"*July* 15.—Read the fifth book of Bailly's 'Modern Astronomy,' but did not study completely the mathematical details. It contains a very clear, and, I suppose, a very full account of Ptolemy's merits as an astronomer. He seems to have been in mathematics what Aristotle was in moral science and general literature. They equalled each other in the toil of research and in extent of knowledge. They were both, in their respective walks, men of very powerful imagination for the inventions of hypothesis. But not satisfied with this claim, they both undertook the great plan of systematising all the knowledge of their age; and by that means secured a similar fate, of establishing their own reputation on the oblivion of the many discoverers who had preceded them, and of teaching the rudiments of science to one generation after another. I wish M. Bailly had accounted for the total decay of astronomical genius from the time of Ptolemy; five hundred years elapsed before the invasion of the Arabs—five hundred years, it would appear, of political quiet; as there was no want of commentators on the works of Hipparchus and Ptolemy. In the few notes I have made on this chapter, I have taken notice of some faults and some beauties

in the composition, as well as of some remarks which will furnish future reflections to myself. 1798. ÆT. 20.

"After Bailly I read just before going to bed the 295th letter of Chesterfield.* It is finished off in his best style of sarcastic and malicious irony; but I cannot yet believe, till I have seen this same 185th letter, that Fenelon deserves the satire of his lordship: I feel a sort of violence done to my feelings, when I see the amiable and enlightened author of Telemachus exhibited in such a ridiculous and contemptible point of view. It is true, however, that this high idea of his character has formed itself in my mind on no better proof that I can remember than the sentimental purity of his literary professions. This letter has suggested several idioms to me."

LETTER XXI. TO THE REV. JOHN HEWLETT.

Dear Sir, Edinburgh, 17th July, 1798.

The last letter that passed between us, if I remember right, went from me; but it must now be of so old a date, that I think it incumbent on me to write again, lest our correspondence should die away altogether. Your time, I am sensible, may at all times be much more valuably employed; but I find that mine can never be so agreeably filled up, in the intervals of business, as in addressing myself to you. After having enjoyed the pleasure and benefit of your society for two years, I should have been better reconciled to the loss of it, had a few letters rendered it gradual.

I understand from my friend Mr. Murray, who is at present in London, that he and Mr. Brougham

* Tenth edition, 4 vols. 12mo. London, Dodsley, 1792.—ED.

1798. Æt. 20. had the pleasure of meeting with you at the Foundling. They were much gratified by your politeness to them, for which you will permit me to thank you, as a kindness done to myself. Had you any conversation with Brougham? He is an uncommon genius, of a *composite order*, if you allow me to use the expression; he unites the greatest ardour for general information in every branch of knowledge, and, what is more remarkable, activity in the business, and interest in the pleasures of the world, with all the powers of a mathematical intellect. Did you notice his physiognomy? I am curious to know your observations on it.

Holiday time being now nearly over, I believe—you are just returned from some pedestrian expedition. Where did you direct your course this year? Wherever it was, I wish I had been of the party. You will remember your engagement to see Wales with me, though we cannot indeed positively fix the time yet. But tell Timothy, that at all events I am *resolved* to get my *heel galled* by the way, purely that he may have the felicity of seeing the stripling come down hill on a *gray charger*. I hope your worthy brother has me still in remembrance; and I know too well his talent at recollecting old friends, with all their calamities and misventures on their back, to doubt that *Arreton Downs* still make a most excellent joke. Ask Timmy, whether he and I could not, the first time we meet at Shacklewell, beat "brother John and Dumas at fives—and give 'em *three?*"

I am impatient, my dear sir, to hear of your being in the press, either with your work on the Dæmoniacs, or on some subject of a higher cast. I wish the public had some monument of your talents, wor-

thy of them. With people of true taste and judgment, your sermons will maintain your reputation in the highest rank of that line; yet you have confessed to me yourself, more than once, that sermons are not the literary object to which your mind would have most naturally turned, and I am convinced that they never can rouse it to the efforts of which it is capable. May I flatter myself with one day reading some work, by you, in philosophy or history? the philosophy, I mean, of manners, character, and morals—or the history of science and civilisation. I am sure there are many such subjects still uncultivated, many in which you already possess original and striking views, and none on which you could bestow pains without turning it to valuable instruction, and adorning it with all the charms of fine writing. 1798. Æt. 20.

I have not remitted my application to the study of composition. Not having the opportunity of oral precepts, such as I once enjoyed, I am obliged to have recourse to didactic writers expressly on the subject. The best I have yet found is Condillac, in his *Traité sur l'Art d'écrire.* Being also deprived of the advantages of idiomatic conversation, for in this part of the world not a mouth opens but some barbarism or other finds its way out, I apply to the perusal of your best writers. The letters of Chesterfield are what I use at present for idioms, and the political works of Bolingbroke for the artifices of composition. Will you add your instructions? I should find them of essential service. I make no doubt, you already detect, in the twang of my letters, the old leaven of Scottish corruption.

Having now exhausted my paper, and perhaps your patience long ago, I beg you to remember me kindly to Mrs. Hewlett. I fear she won't permit me

1798. Æt. 21. to address her but at second hand. I wish her long health and happiness.

I am ever,
My dear Sir,
Affectionately yours,
FRA. HORNER.

JOURNAL. "*August* 17*th.*—Read, but can scarcely say I studied, Bailly, from p. 30. to p. 64. In the course of this day, I have enjoyed a good deal of profitable conversation with my friend Brougham, whose studies are at present political, and whose conversation always affords me improvement.

"Read, in the afternoon, some of Turgot's 'Reflections on the Formation and Distribution of Wealth,' a work which appears to have been truly denominated, by Condorcet, the germ of Adam Smith's Inquiry. It is a series of propositions, enunciated and proved. What a difficult matter it is to treasure up processes of reasoning in the memory! I should think geometrical studies the best calculated to form this habit in the mind. I find my memory much better adapted for the remembrance of facts, but not insulated facts, than for the possession of systematic arrangements and argumentative deductions; I must labour to improve it. Perhaps one of the best exercises, is to get into the practice of frequently running over the detail of such arguments or experiments as I have been reading of.

"*November* 13*th.*—I have omitted keeping any journal through this long period*, which, though not remarkably busy, has not been by any means idle. My only study has been English history,

* Since the 6th of October.

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particularly the history of law, government, and manners. I have studied Hume as far as the reign of Henry VII., and Millar to the end of his History of Parliament. This day the winter session commences; and, except an hour at Stewart's Class of Moral Philosophy, I shall devote my whole time to law and the business of the Speculative Society. In the morning, till twelve o'clock, I shall read civil law, and prepare for my trials; from twelve till two I shall be at college; from two, I write out my notes from Hume's lectures, and study Scots law; and then give the rest of the day to history, politics, and the business of the Speculative.

"*February 5th.*—This evening I finished a paper, the composition of which has occupied me nearly a week, 'On the Opposition Party in Parliament.'*

"I have so long omitted my Journal, in a great measure from indolence; in fact, I have gone on this winter in my old silly way, setting out with most magnificent resolutions, and scarcely doing any thing at all. The greatest labour I have been at this winter has been the writing of notes from Hume's† Lectures, of which I have got above 200 folio pages; but have lately done nothing, even in that way. I have studied nothing of civil law; and I have now had the books two years, without taking any *usufruct* of them; I ought to have passed my first trials long since. I mean to set seriously about it now, proposing to pass them in May.

* What became of this and other essays will be seen by the following entry in the *Journal* on the 16th of March, 1800. "This morning a bundle of my own works fell into my hands, essays on imagination, the dramatic unities, the marvellous, imitation, national character, the opposition party in parliament, &c., the offspring of former labours, the nurselings of former self-applause: but I was so mortified with them, that I committed them without mercy to the flames."—Ed.

† Professor of Scots Law in the University of Edinburgh.

1799. Æt. 21. "*February* 11*th.*—I daily find it more necessary to be anxious about the formation and expression of my political opinions. In such times as the present, there is some merit in setting about it in a manly and open manner. On the one hand, the majority of the country runs strongly and implicitly in favour of a minister who has made the greatest inroads on the constitution; on the other, there is a set of people who, undoubtedly, some from wicked and ambitious, others from honest views, pant after a new and republican order of things. Between these two fires, there is some courage in pleading the cause of our neglected constitution; it must of course be a most unpopular engagement; but there is so much the more satisfaction to one's self in maintaining a firm post against such variety of assailants.

"*February* 19*th.*—Have been doing a little in the way of civil law, reading the twentieth book of the Pandects on the subject of Pledge and Hypotheque. I find the most advantageous mode of studying law is to have an eye to the reasons, historical or philosophical, of every positive enactment; to analyse what Montesquieu properly called *l'esprit des loix;* to keep in mind the maxim of Celsus the civilian—'SCIRE LEGES *non est, verba earum tenere, sed vim ac potestatem:*' independent of the interest which this mode of investigation imparts to a subject, which is often represented, by those, I imagine, who had not tried such a plan, as meagre and dry; independent also of the scientific dress with which it clothes what would otherwise be a mass of unrelated particulars, to be comprehended only by the mechanical drudgery of memory; independent of all this, I find that the philosophical manner of studying the subject puts me in possession of a sort of instrument of artificial memory

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without which I could not so easily make myself master of the details of law. As the regular pursuit of every point up to its original in history or in philosophical reasons would lead me too far from my immediate object, I shall take such notes as may supply me with topics of future research.

"I have entered on a plan, with Lord Webb Seymour*, of discussing with him, after Stewart's lecture, the different arguments or topics which it comprehended. We have done so for three or four days; his regularity will perhaps insure mine. This scheme prevents me from attending the Scots law; but the truth is, I have in a great measure given that up for this winter, the civil law is quite enough. By the plan of conversation with Lord Webb, I shall perhaps acquire some new views, and at least familiarise old notions, on the interesting topics of moral philosophy; I shall have a daily lesson and exercise in what I have so long found my deficiency, the practice of argumentative discussion. I have hardly yet ascertained his character; but he seems possessed in a considerable degree of that acuteness which arises, not from constitutional ingenuity and liveliness of fancy, but from habits of persevering attention.

* Brother of the present Duke of Somerset. Soon after leaving Oxford, he came to Edinburgh; and his attention being particularly directed to mathematics and physical science, especially geology, he lived much with Mr. Playfair and Sir James Hall. He was also intimate with Mr. Dugald Stewart and Mr. Henry Mackenzie, as well as with many of the younger men of distinguished talent in Edinburgh at that time. As Lord Webb Seymour is so little known in proportion to his deserts, I am happy to be able to refer the reader to a biographical notice of him, drawn up by one of his early and intimate friends. (See Appendix A.) In a letter from his Lordship to Mr. Hallam, dated from Edinburgh, Nov. 10. 1799, the following passage occurs:—"Since my arrival, I have rather been dabbling in different branches of science, than attending seriously to any. I have been engaged in some stout metaphysical discussions on Time and Space, Cause and Effect, and such light topics, with a friend whose name is Horner. From these we have derived no great advantage, except that we may suppose our faculties to have been strengthened by the exercise."

1799. Æt. 21. "*February* 21*st.*—I am going on in the plan of conversation with Lord Webb, and am willing to believe that I have already acquired a little more *habileté* in argument. It is not an argumentative *mania* that I wish to form, but to avoid that unfortunate habit, at the same time that I acquire some practical skill in the exercise of the reasoning faculty. I find that undivided attention, and a skill in stating propositions to myself in clear and precise language, form the great constituents of that faculty.

"I have also dabbled a little in the Pandects, and finished this morning the subject of 'Pledge.'

"Lord Webb Seymour entered into his twenty-sixth year yesterday. I am not sure that his genius is of a high order, but he possesses several of the most essential constituents to the character of a true philosopher: an ardent passion for knowledge and improvement, with apparently as few preconceived prejudices as most people can have. A habit of study intense almost to plodding—a mild, timid, reserved disposition with respect to the communication of such sentiments as he feels to be contrary to public prejudices. On this last head, in giving me a hint that he requested and expected confidential secresy, he made an observation, the truth of which struck me forcibly, from what I am conscious of with regard to my own character, viz., that those who are most forward and bold in proclaiming their own paradoxes, are least to be trusted in the deposit of such of our opinions as we are inclined to make known only to private friends.

"There is a style of behaviour with which I am not at all acquainted, but which I should aim at, as an invaluable possession, by which it is possible to keep certain sentiments within one's own breast, or at least within the circle of a few friends, and at the same

time fall into no corrupt hypocrisy or unmanly acquiescence in the opinions of whatever company we may happen to meet. 1799. Æt. 21.

"*April* 10*th*.—Read a little Spanish, the novel of 'Impertinent Curiosity,' in the second volume of Don Quixote. In learning this language, I follow a plan recommended (I think) by Gibbon, endeavouring to acquire a readiness of translation before taking up the grammar. I was tempted a few days ago to undertake this language, from the simple motive of wishing to read Campomanes.

"Read half the first canto of Delille's 'Jardins.' This, as an exercise of taste in composition; the precepts of Delille to the gardener, admit of an easy application to the subject of style; and his own manner furnishes a continual commentary of examples and illustration.

"On the subject of population, which I am considering at present with a view to a paper for the Academy*, I read Filangieri, and one of Kames's sketches. Hitherto I have learnt nothing, but to doubt of the general principles which are laid down as certain. I doubt that number is in itself a direct object of legislative solicitude; I suspect the proposition, that a people will always people up to its resources, to be contrary to fact; and even the fundamental idea, the connexion between population and subsistence, though I can hardly entertain a question of its truth, is in neither of these authors explained in that clear, simple, or direct manner which ensures conviction. I have not for a long time met with a more eloquent passage than the description in Filangieri, pp. 69 and 70., of the exaction of taxes. The conclusion shows true genius

* The Academy of Physics; see note, p. 41.

1799. Æt. 21. in the selection of circumstances:—'il letto sul quale essa aveva pochi giorni dietro dato un cittadino allo stato, quella ruvida veste colla quale essa cercava di nascondere la sua miseria nel giorno destinato ad assistere alla mensa del Signore,' &c.

"*April* 21*st.*—Began a course of civil law, with the serious purpose of passing my trials in the course of two months. I may well be ashamed, when I recollect how long I have had the books upon civil law, and therefore professed to study it, without having ever set about it except by fits now and then, such as cannot possibly leave any impression. In these two months I can expect to do nothing more than get such a general and superficial knowledge as will qualify me for passing the very light examination to which we are here subjected; even this, however, will demand pretty hard, at least regular, work.

"*April* 22*d.*— I can now speak of the character of Lord Webb Seymour with greater certainty. Bating the article of inventive genius, he is formed in every respect to be a true philosopher. Passionate in the pursuit of knowledge, he has the inestimable art of keeping a rein over his curiosity; by limiting his investigations to one object at a time, and by proceeding in all his inquiries with the utmost caution and patience. I never knew a person read so slowly, and with such circumspection: perhaps he may even carry this to an extreme, so diffident is he of his having got possession of a subject till he has turned it about in every point of view. He can subject himself to general rules, which, perhaps, he carries too far in matters of diet, &c. He will be an active student all his life, if his whole character and habits do not alter; and he studies with such judgment, that I question whether a day passes in which he has not made some

intellectual improvement. His actual acquisitions are considerable: he is an accurate scholar, and has read most of the Greek classics; he is minutely skilled in chemistry, particularly mineralogy, and also in botany. He is at present engaged, and that zealously, in the study of mathematics. But the knowledge which I most admire in him, as that indeed in which I am myself most miserably deficient, is the knowledge of character, in which he quite astonishes me sometimes; his skill in this way is heightened by a considerable proficiency in the science of physiognomy. I have made several experiments, of proposing faces to him, the characters belonging to which I had been long intimately acquainted with, but of which he had no knowledge whatever; and his answers have at once given me a satisfactory proof that physiognomy has a foundation in scientific principles, and that his *habileté* in the application of those principles is very considerable. 1799. Æt. 21.

"*April 23d.*—With a view to style, studied about thirty lines in Goldsmith's 'Deserted Village,' and read Gibbon's account of the abdication and retreat of Diocletian. This sort of exercise, I hope, will give me a store of elegant turns of expression so necessary to extempore speaking: there is nothing deserving the name of eloquence which is not always at command; I do not aim at the talent of making fine holiday speeches upon occasion. The most difficult part of style is the structure of sentences; and the structure of plain sentences, in which a proposition is enunciated or a narrative carried on, is much more difficult than that of periods. In this point, I am perfectly untaught; nor do I well know how to set about learning it. As another exercise in style, I translated into English out of a French Spectator; I have taken

1799. Æt. 21. the papers which are written from Sir Roger's house in the country, and do not mean to turn to the original till I have got through them.

"*April 25th.*—Began 'Vie de M. Turgot,' by Condorcet*, and read to p. 60. Interesting in the highest degree, though somewhat too much of a panegyric; a little of the cant of philanthropy, and the style, though extremely elegant, rather laboured and heavy. But it is a book from which I may depend on deriving much advantage if read well; the developement of the views of such a man as Turgot not only tend to enlarge our own views, but cherish that emulation and that admiration of genius, which are the great springs of intellectual improvement. I was much struck with the following observation:—

'Se comparer aux autres hommes pour s'enorgueillir de sa superiorité, lui paroissoit une foiblesse; comparer ses connoissances à l'étendue immense de la nature, lui sembloit une philosophie fausse et propre à produire une inaction dangereuse. C'étoit entre ses connoissances personelles et celles qu'on peut avoir dans le siècle où l'on se trouve, qu'il croyoit qu'un homme raisonable devoit établir cette comparaison, pour bien juger de l'étendue de ses propres lumières: et il n'est personne que cette comparaison ne doive encore rendre très modeste.'

"*April 27th.*—Proceeded with Condorcet, p. 135 to 193. I have now got to his sketch of Turgot's Philosophical Opinions. Here the author seems more at his ease, at least I have felt more at mine. The former part I read very cursorily, though with considerable interest, because I did not find that the author entered sufficiently into detail, either of facts

* Berne, 1787. 8vo.

or reasonings, to excite me to investigation. But I have now found materials for reflection; and a single page in this part of the work occupies me as much as ten in the preceding. At the same time, I must remark an instance of the effect of habit, and the bad effect of giving way to the practice of reading without *l'attention suivie:* the discussion into which the author enters (before coming to the sketch I have spoken of), with respect to the conversion of indirect taxes into one direct territorial tax, gave me some difficulties, and I passed it over as a reserve for the second perusal. So much for pretending to read well! 1799. Æt. 21.

"*April 29th.* — Turned over the second volume of Gibbon's posthumous works,* which are extremely amusing; his journal of studies, while it raises our idea of his powers of application and stores of learning, communicates to the reader a sort of emulation, in which the ingredient of admiration far exceeds that of hope. I met with a remark at p. 320., in his criticism on Silius Italicus, which expresses what (in moments of self-examination and despondency) has frequently occurred to myself with respect to my own character: 'La plupart de ceux qui ont échoué dans la haute poésie avoient *l'esprit dur* et l'imagination déréglée. Comme malheureusement ils avoient aussi peu de goût que de talent, il leur étoit facile *de prendre ces qualités pour la force*, l'élévation et un génie créateur. Ces défauts y avoient du moins quelques rapports.' I am not vain enough ever to say to myself that I want either *goût* or *talent;* but I suspect that the chief particulars in this well written remark are applicable to the character of my

* Quarto edition, 1796.

1799. genius for invention. In composition, for example,
Æt. 21. energy and force is what I have always aimed at, and (while I was composing) thought I excelled in. On subsequent examination of these productions, I have often thought of the lion lashing himself into energy with his tail. Perhaps a plain, correct, perspicuous style, moderately ornamented, is all I am entitled to aim at if I consult my powers; and yet at present the want of these is the most glaring defect of my style.

"*April 30th.* — I read none of Condorcet this day, as I went to the Society* in the evening, where I was much entertained with a discussion between Brougham and Jeffrey on colonial establishments.

"I have now closed the first year of my journal, and should like to take a review of it. But I have no leisure at present. I shall therefore only remark in general, that but a small proportion of this twelvemonth has been employed in study, and that small portion by no means so well employed as it might have been. Instead of a regular plan, my reading has been extremely desultory; the consequence of which is, that instead of having got a firm footing on any part of the field of science, I have only a recollection of its form and appearance, from having once been there; instead of having made any approaches towards a systematic possession of the knowledge that I have, it lies scattered through my memory in a mass of unarranged particulars.

"When I look through this period, I cannot perceive that, except unsuccessful, because unprosecuted, attempts at a superficial knowledge of chemistry and mineralogy, I have made any new acquisitions even

* The Speculative Society.

of undigested knowledge: but this I should have regretted less, had the time been laid out in confirming, correcting, and systematising the ideas I had before. One particular, however, I ought to notice here, because no traces of it that I recollect are to be found in the preceding journal; during this period, I have reflected more than I ever did on the necessity of arranging my knowledge, on the limits within which I should confine myself in the pursuit of science, and on the advantage of having certain definite objects in view. Shall I have more to say at the end of the next twelvemonth than what I have said now? How much might be done by persevering and well-directed application! How little do I possess the courage, the resolution, the intellectual energy on which that application depends! 1799. Æt. 21.

"*May* 1*st*. — Read in Heineccius, lib. xix. tit. 2., on the consensual contracts of *location* and *emphyteusis*, tit. 3, 4, and 5., on innominate contracts and the actions arising from them. Then read the whole of lib. xxi. For me this may be reckoned good work, as it amounts to 24 pages; the titles of lib. xix. I analysed minutely.

"Read the speech of Mr. Addington, the Speaker, on the Irish Union; a sensible and manly detail of the most obvious arguments in favour of that measure, without any specimen of very enlightened or extensive views. I like, throughout this speech, that familiar acquaintance with the principles and language of the constitution, which perhaps betrays the wig and the mace of St. Stephen's Chapel, but which at the same time awakens all my veneration (some of which may be prejudice) for the ancient Whig politics of England, which are at present so much out of fashion, being hated by both parties.

1799. Æt. 21. "Read Condorcet, p. 205 to 231., and wrote a good many notes. For some time past I have found reading become daily more difficult, which I take to be a proof that I shall become in time a good reader, that is, able to read, with all the powers of recollection, reflection, and judgment, at command.

"As my summer course of study commences this day, I shall here sketch the plan I should wish to pursue, and enumerate the objects I am solicitous to attain. I have already more than once experienced my inability to keep to such plans; but I am not the less satisfied of the great benefit that is to be derived from them, if resolutely followed out. Have I not firmness to bind myself by a few rigid rules, to allow no prospect of a new speculation, however inviting, to draw me aside from the route I had chalked out? I fear not—I shall try.

"My different objects may be arranged under four heads; viz. Law, Physical Science, Political Philosophy, and English Composition.

"1. I propose to give at least three hours every day to *Law*, viz. from breakfast to one o'clock; after the month of August, for a reason that will immediately appear, I may add a fourth hour to this allowance. Till the end of June, I shall be occupied with *civil* law. The four succeeding months will be free for *Scots* law, in the study of which my best plan will be to write out as much of Hume's lectures as I shall find convenient, to study the principles in those notes and in Erskine, confining myself for decisions to Kilkerran and Kames' first collection, which afford the best models (though models of a different kind) for Scots law ratiocination; and, if I can accomplish all this, to read Craig 'De Feudis.'

"2. In *Physical Science* I must restrict myself. I

shall attend Allen's* lectures on the *Animal Economy*, in order to acquire some general notion of a subject, on which I have at present no knowledge whatever. But that this may not encroach on my more necessary occupations, I vow never to meddle with the subject, either in the way of completing my notes from his lectures, or reading books connected with the subject, except before breakfast. I have never been in the regular practice of rising early in the morning; so I hope that this new and interesting science may stimulate me to that healthy and valuable habit. The lectures are from one to two o'clock; and as regular exercise ought to accompany regular study, I shall have, for this purpose, the interval between two o'clock and dinner time. 1799. Æt. 21.

" The course will be over in three months. I wish I could bring within these three months a perusal of Euclid's Elements, and of the first volume of Euler's Algebra, but they must not, by breaking in irregularly on my physiological studies, spoil my progress in both.

" 3. Next to law, *Political Philosophy*, *History*, and *Natural Jurisprudence*, are to be my principal objects of pursuit. To these I shall give most of my evenings for six months to come. Two evenings in the week, indeed, must be subtracted, one for the meeting of the Academy; the other I mean to reserve for exercises in style: and I shall put them together, that the train of inquiry may be broken in upon as little as possible.

" With respect to these studies, I am engaged in the first place by an essay on *Population* for the Academy; this I wish to finish as soon as possible, in order that

* The present Master of Dulwich College, then a surgeon at Edinburgh.

1799. Æt. 21. I may proceed to a regular and systematic study of Political Philosophy. I shall begin with reading most accurately and analysing *Montesquieu*'s Spirit of Laws; this will probably suggest a variety of subjects for investigation, one or two of the most general of which I shall prosecute and write on. Nothing contributes so much as original composition, to fix the principles of a science familiarly in one's mind. I shall study and analyse, in the same manner, the *Wealth of Nations;* to complete the study of which, it will be necessary to examine, in the best of their own writings, the system of the French Economists. After so much general inquiry, it would be right, in order to correct the habit of mind that may thereby be formed, to give a little time to the perusal of books of fact, such as a few of the most classical histories, and one or two of the most judicious travellers. Returning to the science, the last general branch is that of natural jurisprudence, where I shall have rather to think for myself, than derive much light from books. I understand from Reddie, that the best he has met with is a treatise by Cocceius, published in his edition of Grotius. This I shall read; and just as I have time, the work of Grotius himself. If I get through these three standard books with their proper accompaniments, I ought to proceed to English history, and prosecute that study of the government and constitution, in which I made some little progress towards the end of last summer.—4. With respect to *composition*, I wish I could allot more time to it than I have reserved. The single evening in the week will be laid out to best advantage in translation, or the studious and critical perusal of a few of the best English authors. When Allen's course expires, I shall have the hours before breakfast

of the remaining three months to give to Cicero's Orations, and perhaps I may add those of Demosthenes. I shall take an opportunity, also, in such intervals as will sometimes occur, in the prosecution of my political studies, to give an evening or two at a time to the composition of essays on popular topics of morals and criticism. 1799. Æt. 21.

"A vast plan this, exceeding, I suspect, my powers of execution. But I have never known yet what study is; I have never made a real effort of persevering resolution. How many blockheads of the commentator tribe have gone through ten times the labour in the space that I propose. Perhaps brains of such texture are the best fitted for toil. But it is not the fact; read the accounts that are handed down to us of the diligence of Demosthenes, Cicero, Hale, Boyle, Turgot, Jones, Gibbon, &c., not to mention the long series of illustrious mathematicians. The most probable inference I can draw (it is a desponding one for me, and therefore I shall not consider it as certain) is, that the middle order of talents is the least allied to that power of pertinacious application, which, when it consists in mere industry, loads our shelves with the lumber of learning, but, by being joined to inventive genius, has unlocked the treasures of nature, ameliorated the constitution of society, and illuminated the prospects of the human race. This, I say, is the most probable conclusion. But, by way of self-encouragement, I will keep a more pleasing conjecture in view; that it is only for want of such application as might really be exerted, that we are confined to the middle or the lower orders of intellect; and that by the assiduous employment of the means of which we are possessed, it is possible to raise ourselves above the rank into which Nature seems to

1799. Æt. 21. have thrown us, and, though still remaining at an immense distance, to approximate those happier spirits on whom she has, from the first, bestowed the energies and inspiration of genius.

"*May 2d.*—Got up two hours before breakfast, and read some of 'Bell's Anatomy,' on the Mechanism of the Heart: this opened a scene of wonders to me. I consulted Allen what books I should previously read to get a general knowledge of as much physiology as I shall need in order to follow his lectures.

"Read Condorcet, 'Vie de Turgot' from p. 231 to 258, the end: upon the whole I have derived much pleasure from this book, and I think some instruction—that, however, not so much on the subject of political philosophy (for I met with little else than the assertion of opinions) as with respect to some more enlarged notions that it has given me on the subject of intellectual improvement and discipline, especially as to systematising one's knowledge in the memory. The latter part of the volume I have read with great care, but I ran over the first half in so hasty a manner, that I am not entitled to think I have read the book, till after another perusal: I found it in that part too long and too short; too short in each article of the detail, and too long from the number that are brought together. The second perusal I must defer till I come to study the system of the Economists.

"*June 25th.*—I have been for twelve days past on an excursion with Seymour to the Western Highlands, of which, in a separate book, I have kept a short journal.

"*June 26th.*—I resumed my attendance on Allen. This afternoon I went over Salisbury Crags with Seymour and Mr. Playfair, who explained to me the geological arrangement of the rock. Am I in the fulness

of time to become a convert to the Huttonian heresy? —at present, perhaps, *exitiabilis superstitio*, as Tacitus calls Christianity. 1799. Æt. 21.

"*July* 1*st.*—The present month I mean to give up strictly to mineralogy, and Allen's lectures. This morning I went over part of Davy's book with Seymour; I must finish the analysis of it myself, as he leaves town immediately. In the evening, I was present at the Royal Society, and heard Playfair read the first part of his analysis of Hutton's Theory; a very distinct and luminous deduction of a powerful train of arguments, as ever was given in favour of a mere hypothesis.

"*July* 2*d.*—Except the hour employed at Allen's, on the interesting subject of animal temperature, the studies of this day were confined to mineralogy. As yet I can only enjoy the drudgery of learning names, the vocables of a nomenclature in which there seems to be little arrangement and no philosophy. Not having the advantage of a cabinet, I must drudge through books, and add the little I can do for myself in the way of fossilising. The book I chiefly make use of is Saussure, as by far the most interesting I have met with; but as mineralogy has made great advances since the publication of the first volumes, and changes have especially taken place in the nomenclature, I compare his descriptions with those of Kirwan. As my object is geology, I am not sure but external characters (in the first place at any rate) ought to be more attended to than the results of chemical analysis. I strolled for two hours this forenoon about the basaltic columns at Arthur Seat, armed, as if already an adept, with a hammer.

"If I ever accomplish any scientific work, it will probably be in that line to which I have looked for-

1799. Æt. 21. ward for several years; viz. general views of philosophical logic. Previous to any attempt at execution, I must go through the circle of physical, mathematical, and metaphysical sciences. Do I flatter myself with the least approximation to success? This I fear, that, presumptuous as I may be in thinking to get a prospect of the whole land of science, I shall most likely be nothing but a superficial fellow, as to my knowledge of any part of it; I may see the land of self-promise, but most likely shall die like Moses, at a distance. At any rate, let but one science be studied at a time; and always, in each investigation, let me have general principles in view. What would I give for the systematising head, which Condorcet ascribes to Turgot, and which every one acquainted with the history of philosophy ascribes to Bacon! Why have I discernment to perceive that the 'Opus Magnum' should be written anew every century perhaps, and yet want genius to execute the undertaking myself!

"*July 8th.*—I can say very little for myself during the last week—much dissipation of time, and, of course, no study to any good purpose. When shall I learn, that without regular habits I can never make any substantial acquirements, nor advance in that scheme of forming a system of general principles, which is so much an object of my ambition?—To unite the business of a Scotch lawyer with an ardent and steady pursuit of science, as well as the cultivation of taste, especially in composition—a formidable problem! '*Magnis tamen excidam ausis.*'

"My chief defect, in the article of study, is the want of what the French call '*l'attention suivie;*' and this want proceeds (I am convinced) from my habits of irregularity with respect to time. When I am confined to the house (as I was from the 21st of April to the

14th of May), I can prosecute a regular course of inquiry without deviation; but when I study one day, and gad about the next, as is my common practice, there is no chance for any subject exciting a commanding interest; and the warm resolutions of one hour, having taken no firm root in the mind, are easily given up for the novelties of the next, which, in their turn, are soon sacrificed to the first "light gay meteor" that appears on the ever-varying horizon of my rambles. It is not thus that excellence is ever attained, but it is thus that one infallibly gets that flimsy superficies of apparent knowledge, which conceals from the ignorant alone the real deficiencies. I am conscious of being superficial; I can hardly suppose that I am not quite seen through, but I am conscious of powers to become something better than I am at present. 1799. Æt. 22.

"*August* 28*th*. — Translated into English eight maxims of Rochefoucault, beginning with the 85th, and translated six back into French, from the 7th, — very clumsy at both. As a preparation for French composition, I rather think it will be necessary to transcribe for some time: I began to write over the seventh book in the second volume of Bailly's 'History of Modern Astronomy.' I do not lay the book exactly before me, which would make the exercise nothing at all, but at some distance, in order that I may carry a whole sentence in my head at once, and write it down as it were by rote.

"In the afternoon, I employed my thoughts on the best plan of studying history — ran over Bolingbroke on this subject. As I am about to enter on a course of historical and political reading, and am ambitious of studying those important subjects, not in an irregular miscellaneous manner, but with an attention

1799. Æt. 22. to general principles, and a serious attempt to systematise the knowledge which I may be able to amass, it is of some importance, as conducive to that end, to form a distinct view of the objects I mean to pursue. At present, I am sensible it would be no easy matter for me to state to my own mind a distinct conception of those objects; but by endeavouring to arrange such floating ideas as are already in my head, it will be more easy for me to correct and to expand those ideas, as I make some progress in my investigations. Before I enter therefore upon these inquiries, I shall endeavour to form as accurate a notion as I am fit to form of the proper objects of history, of the best mode of studying it, and of the manner in which it should be combined with the elements of political philosophy, in order that each may throw light and strength on the other.

"I imagine the events of history might, with convenience, be divided into two classes; viz. *general* and *particular*—not that I mean, by the word general, any allusion to a classification into genus and species, but as such events as are not single, but made up of a number of particular occurrences, which altogether have such a relation and connection that they appear one great transaction. The American, or English, or French revolutions are what may be called *general* events; the reformation also, the revival of Letters, the irruption of the northern barbarians.

"Mr. Hume has observed, and I believe with great truth, that it is of such general events alone of which we can attempt, philosophically, to investigate the causes; particular events depending on such complicated combinations of minute causes as we are quite unable to develope, and which we therefore denominate chance or accident.

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"The effect of particular events, however, it may frequently be interesting and useful to trace in the course of historical inquiries. But, upon the whole, the consequences of any general event present a wider and more noble field of investigation.

"But I do not mean to affirm that the causes even of particular events are entirely to be overlooked; all speculations with respect to them may probably be resolved into the study of individual characters—and a most attractive study that will ever be found. Some authors, Tacitus and Davila especially, and perhaps De Retz, excel in this line of writing; they have been accused of refining too much sometimes; an error indeed which it must be extremely difficult to avoid. I must leave it among my desiderata upon subject, to settle the rules that ought to be attended to here, in order to reach the proper medium.

"With respect to the investigation of general events, Allen made an excellent observation to me this forenoon, when I was mentioning to him my plans of historical reading; he proposed to divide history into its general events, and, before studying, *tout de suite*, the annals of the world in chronological order, to take those great events, one after the other, and investigate their several causes and various consequences. I rather think this would be the best species of historical reading that I could possibly carry on, along with my political inquiries. I shall attempt to enumerate some of them:—

"1. The Feudal System; its rise, fall, consequences, and what the permanence of those consequences.

"2. The Revival of Letters—prosecuting the history of European literature.

"3. The Reformation—consequences upon science, letters, taste, politics, &c.

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"4. The French Revolution.

"5. The Discovery of America.

"6. The Influence of the commercial spirit on politics, letters, and manners of Europe.

"7. The Rise and Establishment of Christianity, and of Mahometanism.

"8. The Age of Lewis XIV.

"In order to assist me in the prosecution of these reflections, and to form proper notions on the true spirit of historical reading, I shall consult Bolingbroke and Chesterfield; and extract from them what I find most worthy of notice. 'History is Philosophy teaching by examples.'

"The plan I propose for the occupation of the ensuing two months is, all the morning to study history and politics; and, in the afternoon, rhetoric and composition: I shall begin with Smith's Wealth of Nations, next Voltaire's Histoire Générale, and then L'Esprit des Loix. My studies in rhetoric should consist chiefly of actual composition, and an attentive study of a few of only the best models.

"*October 29th.*—My two English friends, the Rev. Sydney Smith and Lord Webb Seymour, are again come to Edinburgh for the winter; and I promise myself much pleasure and much instruction from their conversation. I shall perhaps improve my powers of argumentative dexterity, which are still very low; and, at any rate, I cannot but learn candour, liberality, and a thirst for accurate opinions and general information, from men who possess in so remarkable a degree these valuable dispositions.

"*November 1st.*—Read a little of Millar on Government, in the chapter on the alterations in the courts of justice, during the reign of Edward I. Much of the

information new to me, with respect to the distribution of the English courts; made an acquisition of *two* general principles which I think accurate, viz. the constant progress of the line of distinction between equity and strict law, and the historical origin of the distinction between civil and criminal law. I am not at all satisfied with Millar's account of the circumstances that prevented the Roman law from being so much incorporated with the jurisprudence of England, as with that of other European countries: the jealousy which, at so early a period, was spread through England against the extension of ecclesiastical power, is a circumstance which he wholly overlooks, though it is sufficient perhaps to account for the fact. 1799. Æt 22.

"*November 2d.*—I commenced the study of Scotch Law, and read Erskine's chapter on Jurisdiction. Hume's class opens on the 15th instant, so that I have got a fortnight before him, a start which I should like to keep up in the way of reading, while I go along with him in the notes.

"*November 3d.*—Read two chapters in Erskine's Institute, on the Judges and Courts of Scotland.

"I this day resumed, with Seymour, the investigation we attempted last spring into the nature of probable evidence; taking Hume's Metaphysical Essays, by no means as our text-book or creed, but as furnishing topics for our own reflections. Metaphysics I find a most improving exercise; fixing the powers of attention, and sharpening those of apprehension. Metaphysics and history, says Lord Bolingbroke in a very fine passage of his Letters, are the vantage grounds which a lawyer must seize, if he means to make a science of his profession.

"*Nov. 5th.*—Went through Erskine's title on Mar-

1799. Æt. 22. riage, and read my notes from Hume on the Constitution of Marriage.

"The difficulty of studying law consists in that of filling the memory with an infinite multitude of precepts that appear unconnected. Under each title, I must strive to catch the general principles on which particular ordinances depend; being aware, at the same time, of the danger of an excessive simplification, or of arranging laws under a general principle, which cannot, but by an arbitrary fiction, be made to comprehend them. A remarkable instance of this occurs in the very title I am studying at present: the most general principle with respect to what the law of Scotland requires as necessary to constitute marriage, is the consent *de præsenti;* at the same time it admits consent *de futuro*, provided *subsequatur copula.* Now, Lord Stair endeavours to reduce this case to the general principle, as if consent *de præsenti* were implied in the *copula*, in which he has evidently sacrificed rational arrangement to excessive anxiety for systematic coherence and simplicity.

"By studying law upon this plan of arranging it in my head under general principles, I shall secure the assistance of an artificial memory; I shall place myself in the path to become something more than he whom Cicero describes as a '*leguleius quidem cautus, et acutus præco actionum, cantor formularum, auceps syllabarum;*' and I shall probably preserve my mind in that proper tone and exercise, which is necessary for the prosecution of scientific improvement. There is a passage in Stewart's 'Philosophy of the Human Mind,' which, for some years past, I have been unable to read without mingled emotions of ambition and despair:—'One great use of philosophy is to give

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us an extensive command of particular truths, by furnishing us with general principles, under which a number of such truths is comprehended. A person in whose mind casual associations of time and place make a lasting impression, has not the same inducements to philosophise, with others who connect facts together, chiefly by the relations of cause and effect, or of premises and conclusion. I have heard it observed, that those men who have risen to the greatest eminence in the profession of law, have been in general such as had, at first, an aversion to the study. The reason probably is, that to a mind fond of general principles, every study must be at first disgusting, which presents to it a chaos of facts apparently unconnected with each other. *But this love of arrangement, if united with persevering industry, will at last conquer every difficulty; will introduce order into what seemed, on a superficial view, a mass of confusion, and reduce the dry and uninteresting detail of positive statutes into a system comparatively luminous and beautiful.*' p. 469.*

"*Nov.* 25th.—My time is at present pretty uniformly employed, but as yet I have had no severe study. I go on as usual with my law notes, and augur well of my regularity.

"At the Speculative Society I spoke twice this evening†, and both times without any premeditation. I feel a considerable command of language with regard to fluency, but very little command indeed with regard to selection. How is this judgment and taste to be acquired? Is there any other exercise beside composition? I mean to practise myself in replying;

* First volume, first edition, quarto, 1792.

† The subject of debate was, "Ought the laws against treason to extend to the forfeiture of estates?"—Ed.

1799. Æt. 22. and I think it will be a good plan to confine myself at first to one antagonist, Copland, for instance, and to study most accurately his peculiar style of speaking, his habits of association both in point of illustration and argument, and the most successful plan of encountering him. Then I shall proceed to another, and sometimes venture to give a reply at once to both. The first thing essential to the faculty of making a successful reply, is a strong and undivided attention to the speech which we propose to dissect.

"*Dec.* 3.—Lord Webb Seymour has communicated to me a plan, which his brother the Duke has for some time past been attending to, of forming a Philological Society, ultimately with a view to the invention of a real character. Marsden, Layton, Boucher, and some other philologists, have already been spoken to. I this day read some letters which Seymour put into my hands, and which he has received from his brother, containing a developement of his plan. The perusal of them exceeded the expectations I had conceived with respect to the metaphysical speculations of the Duke; and he seems to have formed a pretty correct, as well as comprehensive, idea of the object to be attended to in the composition of a real character. The project is a grand one; and though it may not, for a long course of time, be completely successful, much subordinate advantage may, in the mean time, result from the prosecution of it. It has awakened (why do I suffer myself to be distracted) some of those speculations in which I indulged myself about five or six years ago, on the subject of Philosophical Grammar; and I should like to prosecute some of the interesting topics which at that time I started to myself. The metaphysics of grammar, and the philosophical investigation of the intellectual instrument-

ality of language, are subjects which I shall keep floating within sight; in case a line of inquiry should present itself, I shall most probably attempt to follow it out. 1799. Æt. 22.

" In the evening I was at the Speculative Society: the question was, ' Can knowledge be too much disseminated among the lower ranks of the people?' In pursuance of my plan, I laid myself out to reply to Copland, who made a speech abounding with information and ingenious argumentation on the affirmative side; I succeeded tolerably well in criticising his arguments. I mention in what I was satisfied, in order that I may distinguish more accurately in what respect I failed. In replying to Copland, I forgot the main object of the question; all Copland's arguments tended to conclude, that the diffusion of knowledge ought to be altogether shut up from the lower classes; whereas the question supposes the contrary of this, and demands whether there is not a maximum beyond which the diffusion ought not to be carried. After clearing away Copland's arguments, I ought to have come to this proposition; the proof of the negative of which would only turn upon an enforcement of the same principles, by which it is shown that the diffusion ought not to be altogether prevented. To prevent this in future, it may be a very good precaution, always to consider the terms of the question, after I have arranged my ideas, and am preparing to speak, and to examine whether in what I have arranged I do not miss the real point to be determined. The other omission consisted in not enforcing more strongly, and illustrating more clearly than I did, an idea which broke in upon me during the course of my argument, and which I fancy might admit of a successful prosecution;

1799. Æt. 22. viz. that with respect to diffusion among the community at large, knowledge may be considered in the light of a commodity, prepared by a separate profession, and consumed or enjoyed by the community as a luxury. I have only to remark another particular; I thought it prudent to take notes of Copland's arguments, and, in speaking, I found it necessary to have frequent recourse to them. I must get the better of this, which is attended with a very awkward effect. I must try to invigorate my powers of attention, and by artifices of arrangement to strengthen my recollection of details. With respect to language, I sometimes feel an absence of strong and eligible expressions; but I have attained a greater fluency than I ever expected. This however is the lowest attainment in the art. By the habitual study of the best writers, particularly the poets, I must store my imagination with the elegancies of expression, and acquire such a habit that my thoughts will naturally present themselves to me clothed in the most perspicuous and the purest language.

"*Dec. 8th.*—A day of metaphysical labour with Seymour. We again took up Robison, but read only one sentence of two lines and a half; for we were immediately carried off into quite a different track. Our speculations related to the proper definition of *Analogy*, and to an arrangement of the different species of argument and the different processes of reasoning, which pass under the denomination of *analogical*. Should I ever succeed in my prospects of a work on the General Principles of Philosophical Investigation, I shall be much indebted to these exercises with Lord Webb; if not for principles ascertained, at least for the discipline to which I am inured.

"*Dec. 13th.*—This day being appointed for the funeral

of the great Black* (whose death a few days ago was such as may be considered the true recompense of a philosophical life), and there being consequently no business at college, I employed myself in drawing up my paper on Disposing Affinity, which I read at the Academy in the evening. 1799. Æt. 22.

"*Dec.* 31*st.*— Since the 20th, I have been very regularly employed. I have got on wonderfully with my law notes, but have done very little as to real acquisition of knowledge, except dabbling a little in chemical papers. Yet I flatter myself that I am gradually creeping into a systematic disposition of my time, and more regular habits of application, than I have for some time past been accustomed to. The greater part of the day I give exclusively to Scots law, hitherto with many exceptions no doubt, but such temptations I hope in time to get the better of. Chemistry I only read before breakfast; and as the days are now lengthening, I trust my measure of philosophical reading will receive a proportional augmentation. The evenings are given to general reading; I should wish to confine them to style and the perusal of models of eloquence. I have been delighting myself with some of Cicero's Rhetorical Dissertations; which swell one's imagination and ambition towards the conception of that *aliquid immensum et infinitum*, which he paints with such enthusiasm. I wish to study upon general principles the plan of intellectual education; for every man must educate himself, as I am now beginning to be sensible. This education consists in the formation of habits; for which two previous questions are necessary, the choice of the habits, and the mode after

* Dr. Joseph Black, Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh. — Ed.

1799. Æt. 22. which they are to be acquired. In order to simplify this important task, I have confined my reflections at first to one habit alone, the arrangement of time: but as I have not yet matured my ideas on the subject, and as I am still farther from having reduced any of those ideas into practice, I must defer taking any farther notice of this at present. At the end of the year I should like to take a retrospect; and consider, as far as they may still be brought together, the improvements, or at least the changes, of character which I have undergone. But I must refer this to the first vacant day.

"I was more idle to-day, as to Scots law, than I have been for a fortnight past: an experiment in chemistry led me astray, *sinner that I am!*

"In the evening I read the Eloge of Haller in the Memoirs of the French Academy, written, I suppose, by Condorcet; at any rate, by the hand of a master. Of all the species of writing, literary biography is to me the most delightful. I never rise from an account of such men as Haller without a sort of thrilling palpitation about me, which I know not whether I should call admiration, ambition, or despair."

LETTER XXII. TO MR. WILLIAM ERSKINE*, DUNSE, BERWICKSHIRE.

Dear Sir, York Place, 23d January, 1800.

I have been desirous of writing to you, since I first heard you had left Edinburgh; but, till the

* In the spring of 1804, Mr. Erskine accompanied Sir James Mackintosh to India; and, on the formation of the Literary Society of Bombay, in November of that year, he was chosen as their secretary. He is the author of several valuable papers in the Transactions of that society, and translated the "Memoirs of the Emperor Bâber," published in 1826. Of

present opportunity, I have never succeeded in catching a single hour to employ so agreeably. I cannot make a parade of professions, but believe me no one felt more sincere regret when I was informed of your departure from this place, nor feels now more solicitude for the success of the choice which you have adopted. A great town I believe is the true scene for a man of letters, but I know likewise that independence ought to be the first object of our arrangements for life, and that the passion for literature ought only to be gratified in the second place. At the same time you are not at so great a distance from us as to be deprived of the chief advantages which a metropolis affords, with respect to the encouragement of literary pursuits; and I hope you will not allow the distance to prevent your participation in the greatest of all those advantages, the free communication among those who are engaged in similar studies.

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Reddie *, Brown †, and I have lately projected a translation of the political and philosophical writings of Turgot, and we are anxious to engage you in the undertaking. There is no collection of those valuable dissertations even in the original language, and one

the merits of the latter work, the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, in his "History of India," thus speaks: — "Almost all that has been said of Bábar has been drawn from Mr. Erskine's admirable translation of his Memoirs from the Túrki. The notes and supplements which accompany that work remove the obscurities which, without such assistance, would beset us in every page; and the preliminary dissertation gives a complete view of the state of Asia in Bábar's time, and contains the best account of the geography of the countries which were the scene of his exploits, and the clearest exposition of the divisions of the Tartar nations. The translation seems to have imbibed the very spirit of the original. The style is singularly happy, strikingly characteristic, though perfectly natural, and equally remote from the usual inflated language of the East, and from the imitation of scriptural simplicity into which other translators of similar works have fallen." (Vol. ii. p. 121.) — Ed.

* James Reddie, Esq. See note, page 21.

† Dr. Thomas Brown, afterwards the successor of Dugald Stewart in the chair of Moral Philosophy.

1800. Æt. 22. only has hitherto appeared in English, so that the plan is a very promising one. Reddie, as you might guess, insists that his share in the execution should be kept a secret; Brown and Jeffrey make no objection of any kind; and Murray and Lord W. Seymour are both desirous to have a portion of the task allotted them. By means of this subdivision, I think it may be accomplished without toil to any one. I have written to a London bookseller (Johnson), to have his commercial opinion of the project. The works of Turgot which we have collected are, his letters on the corn laws, on provincial administrations, on the interest of money, on toleration, on the police of the administration of mines, on the iron manufactory, his outlines of the theory of national wealth, five articles in the *Encyclopédie,* and a short letter on the poetry of savage nations: some others may perhaps be found by a more diligent search, but these alone would make a valuable present to the public; their contents are at once so important and so unknown. We think it would be proper, too, to include a new translation of Condorcet's biographical account, with extracts from the more detailed memoirs of Dupuy. That the translation might do us credit, and not be a mere job, it is proposed that each of us should not only subject his own translation to the criticism of the rest, but also undertake to revise that of his associates.

Professor Stewart has lately begun a course of lectures on Political Economy; and though his plan is not quite so comprehensive as he proposes to render it next winter, yet I promise myself great instruction; and I hope he will at least have the influence to make this captivating science more popular than it has been for some time past, and that he will render us familiar with those liberal enlarged views which he forms

upon sciences. Hitherto he has been occupied with preliminary disquisitions on the history of the science, and the best mode of prosecuting its inquiries. We had an admirable lecture on Godwin's system; in the discussion of which Stewart displayed, with his usual eloquence, more than usual acuteness; at least it was quite a new view of that system to me, to consider it as a *reductio ad absurdum* of Hutcheson's principle of universal benevolence. If you are willing to enter into a correspondence, I shall be very happy to give you an account of Stewart's speculations, as well as such other literary news as may occur from time to time. 1800. Æt. 22.

I am ever sincerely yours,

FRA. HORNER.

JOURNAL. "*Feb.* 2d. — PLAN. — I have long been feeding my ambition with the prospect of accomplishing, at some future period of my life, a work similar to that which Sir Francis Bacon executed almost two hundred years ago. It will depend upon the success and the turn of my speculations, whether they shall be thrown into the form of a discursive commentary on the '*Instauratio Magna*' of that illustrious author, or shall be entitled to an original form, under the title of a 'View of the Limits of Human Knowledge, and a System of the Principles of Philosophical Inquiry.'

"I shall say nothing at present of the audacity of such ambition. No presumption is culpable, while it only stimulates to great undertakings; it becomes excessive when it appears ridiculous by the inadequacy of what is performed, when contrasted with what is attempted. If I have vanity enough to think myself—



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1800. Æt. 22. I do not say *equal* to such a scheme, but *capable* of rendering myself equal to it, I trust I shall retain pride and discretion enough to be conscious all along how far my acquisitions are adequate to my aims.

"The chief difficulties I shall have to encounter, arise from the vast extent of the plan itself, from the necessity of making it but a secondary object during the greater part of my life, and from my natural indolence and versatility. To the proper remedy of these evils, and the proper counterpoise of these obstacles, I must pay a solicitous and persevering attention; above all, to the most effectual means of economising intellectual labour, and of methodising the distribution of time. But I do not mean to enter upon these details at present. My object in committing myself to paper upon this occasion is very different. In order to reduce my views within the span of probable longevity, I must look forward with courage, but at the same time with discretion and prudence, to the *quantum* of science which it is practicable for me to attain, in compatibility with my professional pursuits, within the next twenty years. It is proper for me to know how much I should aspire to, and then to arrange the order of my journey. At present, I am of all men that pretend to be informed the most superficial: I have dabbled in languages, mathematics, mechanics, chemistry, metaphysics, the fine arts, even physiology and physiognomy: on all of them I can talk very fluently before the ignorant, but on none of them am I profoundly, or even accurately, informed, or capable of thinking for myself, either with originality or with precision. I see therefore what yet remains to be done, viz. to take up one science after another, and work doggedly through its details; to content myself, as far as vanity is con-

cerned, with the reputation, which every superficial man acquires, of being a profound *savant* on those subjects on which I still remain superficial; and, as far as ambition is concerned, to content myself with the consciousness that my claim to real information and science will be progressively augmenting. 1800. Æt. 22.

"Before I enter upon this course, I am not sure but it may be advisable to extend my surface a little farther; that is, previous to the particular investigation of any one science through its details, to make myself master of the elements merely of all the different sciences. This idea I adopt, not merely from a conviction, that it is in early life that elements are most easily acquired; but likewise from its appearing to suit more happily, than any other plan, the project I have in view as the end of all my labours. For by thus embracing an elementary view of all the sciences, I shall obtain probably, in the same proportion, an elementary and imperfect conception of that *Prima Philosophia* which I mean to extract from my studies.

"So much am I convinced of the propriety of keeping my final object always in sight, and of making references to it in every state of my advancement, that I intend to attempt even at present, in the crude state of my elementary knowledge, a sketch of my ultimate plan. It will be the scrawl of a child, who has for the first time laid his hands on a pencil; without proportion, without transition, without mind, without shading, without perspective, almost without form.

"*Sketch, &c.*—1. It will probably be long ere I can decide, whether the best plan is to throw the 'view of the object of science,' and the 'system of logic,' into two separate treatises, as Bacon has done, or to combine them into one great regular

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"2. Philosophy is the knowledge of those numerous existents or beings that compose the universe, and of those various events which compose the phenomena of the universe. The rules and method of philosophical investigation are directed to the means of acquiring and of preserving this knowledge with the greatest accuracy, security, and facility. A knowledge of the beings that compose the universe seems to consist in a proper classification of them; and constitutes Natural History. Such classifications appear at first sight to be nothing more than artificial assistances to memory: if they are nothing else, it remains to inquire, upon what general principles such classifications should be constructed, so as most effectually to answer the purpose which they are intended to serve. This discussion, however, belongs to another part of the arrangement; here we have only to determine how far the knowledge of existents lies in classification, and how far the utility of classification consists in aiding the memory.

"A knowledge of the *events* which compose the phenomena of the universe consists also in a classification of those events; in other words, in the reduction of them to general facts or events, which are commonly but improperly called *general laws*. There appears to be some essential and fundamental distinctions between this classification and the former, though I cannot yet point out on what it depends."

*Note by Mr. Horner on the margin of this page of his Journal, dated the 12th of July.*—"The an-

nexed plan fell into my hands* among other scrawls, and I looked at it as if it had fallen from heaven. I have an indistinct recollection, however, of having written this dream one rainy afternoon, when I dreamt of a resolution to be a great man.—'*Parce*, PUER, *stimulis*, &c.——'" 1800. Æt. 22.

LETTER XXIII. TO THE DUKE OF SOMERSET.

My Lord, Edinburgh, 14th February, 1800.

I have been prevented by indisposition from acknowledging the letter with which you lately honoured me, and in which you communicate to me some idea of your views with respect to the improvement of language. No piece of literary intelligence ever gave me more pleasure than I received when Lord Webb first informed me that such views were afloat. For though I have long been satisfied that the invention of a real character is practicable, yet I had almost despaired of witnessing the attempt; the difficulties which surround the undertaking are so formidable, and so repulsive to the prevailing taste. Those difficulties, indeed, may safely be pronounced insurmountable by individual exertion; though to associated talents and combined industry they present a field, extensive indeed, but by no means unbounded, and promising in the highest degree.

The foundation of the great fabric must unquestionably be laid in metaphysics; or, to abandon so alarming a phrase, in that science which teaches us to analyse the operations of the understanding, and to

* This "Plan" was written on a separate paper, and is stitched into the Journal. — ED.

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But, in my opinion, the invention of the signs, and the analysis of the ideas which they are to represent, are researches that coincide, and ought to be carried on together. On the one hand, we cannot with propriety set ourselves to affix signs, but in proportion as we advance in resolving the principles of human knowledge into their elements; otherwise, our real character would not be a philosophical language. On the other hand, (whatever theory we adopt with regard to the nature of general and abstract ideas), it can scarcely be doubted, that our success in analysing the principles of knowledge will be partial and insecure, so long as we have not a philosophical language at hand, in which we may record the results that we obtain.

As to the coincidence, however, or at least very intimate connection, of those two researches, my opinion is principally derived from a theory on which the best metaphysicians of modern Europe are agreed; and, according to which, Language is not only instrumental in the communication of sentiments, but likewise in the solitary intellectual processes of reasoning and reflection. Your Grace must be well acquainted, I presume, with the arguments on which that theory is founded; for it furnishes the most satisfactory illustration of the necessity as well as practicability

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of a real character. And, if I am not much mistaken, the farther elucidation of that principle might, in a great degree, facilitate the execution of the project. For, though the general fact appears sufficiently ascertained by the evidence which Berkeley and Condillac have adduced, yet its effects on the intellectual economy have not been investigated with that minuteness which the importance of the subject demands. It would probably throw much light on the best scheme of a philosophical language, were we enabled to trace the steps by which the mind proceeds in the invention and use of artificial signs, the manner in which they enter into the processes of intellectual exertion, and the influence which different systems of signs (I mean different in point of brevity and precision, as well as in the fundamental principles of their structure) may have upon the habits and perhaps the capacity of the understanding: beside a variety of other topics, that might be easily enumerated. These present a very interesting field of inquiry, which, so far as I know, has not yet been explored.

If your Grace is of opinion, that these speculations bear any affinity to the great object which you have in view, I shall with great pleasure communicate whatever ideas may hereafter occur to me, in the course of my metaphysical studies. As I cannot pretend, however, to any thing but a consciousness of my ignorance in these matters, and an anxiety to remove that ignorance, I trust you will always receive my remarks as nothing else than hints and invitations to discussion. Your condescension in writing to me upon the subject, encourages me to believe that mutual and free discussion was what you intended. I shall therefore make no apology for the metaphysical aspect of the present letter; into which I have been

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betrayed, by your compliment to Scotland for her attachment to a science as unalluring, it is usually conceived, as her own soil and climate. That compliment, my Lord, I swallowed with the more exquisite relish, under recollection of the mortification which I have often experienced in England, on account of the same national peculiarity. The unpopularity of metaphysics in England has retarded very much the general progress of the science. For we can scarcely preserve ourselves in Scotland from falling into a sort of sect, and yielding of course to the unphilosophical spirit of sectaries, sometimes perhaps to the still more unphilosophical temper of persecuted sectaries. In our moments of candour, however, we cannot fail to recollect, that whatever the case may be at present, the light of rational metaphysics first broke upon us from England, the venerable source of all our learning, and all our improvement. You can put no author in competition with Hume, for importance of metaphysical research and admirable perspicuity of metaphysical language; but his is the single name we can oppose to those of Locke and Berkeley. At the same time, it must be confessed, that the name of the latter illustrious man is almost forgotten in England; and a sound national Scotsman, priding himself sincerely on his admiration of Locke, might insinuate, perhaps with plausibility, that even that philosopher owes the reputation he enjoys among his countrymen more to his Whig pamphlets than to his "Essay on Human Understanding."

I have the honour to be
Your Grace's most obedient humble servant,
FRA. HORNER.

JOURNAL. "*March 26th.*—In a fortnight it will be my turn to read a paper at the Speculative Society, for the subject of which I have chosen 'the Circulation of Money.' This forenoon I endeavoured to meditate, and made out a few queries; all I can hope to do for some days to come. I find the circulation of money a very dark subject, though a few gleams of light have struck me. 1800. Æt. 22.

"*April 8th.*—The circulation of money I found a subject of too great difficulty; and what Smith and others have written on it too controvertible to allow me to draw up a paper on it within so short a time. After running myself within four days of this date, I have been forced to change the subject of my paper for the Speculative; and I read this evening some remarks on the influence of a great commercial metropolis on the prosperity of the state. I had often made this a topic of reflection; so that I had little to do but putting together. I rather congratulate myself that I wrote above one half of the disquisition at one sitting this forenoon, and that I read the whole of it from the first draught, without being reduced, as formerly, to the sad task of copying. I must now apply with unremitting diligence to Scots law, as I mean to pass my trials in the course of two months.

"*April 18th.*—Four hours in the forenoon on the subjects of *Tack* and *Wadset;* refreshed myself before dinner with a few chapters of Livy. In the afternoon Brougham * and I went over the title in Erskine's Principles, 'Of the Vassal's Right;' and in the evening I was at Stewart's lecture, in which he gave an account of the poor laws of England and Scotland.

"*May 8th.*—This was a rambling sort of day. In the morning, instead of my regular allotted portion of

* They met at this time regularly, to study Scots law together.—ED.

1800. Æt. 22. Scots law, I studied the circumstances of a case which Murray put into my hands, relating to testamentary succession. Brougham came to *grind*, and we had nearly gone through the title of Adjudications, when Lord Webb called, to propose a walk; we set out all three, and had a little chemical chat. In the evening, after lounging about an hour over Bell's Travels, to dispel the drowsiness of rapid digestion, I set myself down to Pinto*; and had worked about a couple of hours, when Brougham came to show me a mathematical communication that had been anonymously sent him from London, in which some criticisms were contained upon his last paper on Porisms. The essay is upon cycloidal curves; and the author affects to have discovered that the prolate and contracted are sufficiently distinct from the ordinary cycloid to entitle them to a separate name. Before going to bed, I endeavoured to refresh my memory upon this subject. What a time it is since I tasted the pleasures of mathematical exercise!

"*May* 11*th.*—Did not read a syllable of Scots law, but lounged all the morning over some commercial details, till Brougham called on me, in company with Miller†, who is come to town with a view of passing his trials in civil law. Walked out with my father to dine with Sir Patrick Inglis.‡ As we went along, I got some valuable commercial information. Indeed, if I were awake to the opportunities that I daily possess, I might receive from my father a great deal of information in that line; to an extensive experience, he has added the habit of viewing that experience upon enlightened general principles.

* "On Circulation and Credit," the work of a Portuguese Jew. — Ed.
† Son of Mr. Miller of Dalswinton, in Ayrshire.
‡ His father's partner in business. — Ed.

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"*May* 19*th.*—In the forenoon, studied Scots law for three hours: got through *Poinding*, and entered on the doctrine of *Prescription*. Lounged with Seymour till dinner-time in the Botanic Garden, Leith Walk; and after dinner lounged, in a different manner, over the first twelve chapters of the fourth book of the Annals of Tacitus.

"I cannot resist, as I ought to do, the luxurious temptations of a fine evening, especially when I can enjoy it in a solitary walk, and absorb myself in the delirium of meditative romance. All my plans of life have been reviewed this evening, and I have suffered my imagination to pursue, with unrestrained sensibility, the track of future scenes. Such fits of musing may have a decided effect even in realising their own fond anticipations, if I can always guide them to leave upon me this valuable impression; that my objects must be simplified, my views systematised, my ambition concentrated.

"*May* 20*th.*—In spite of the near approach of my Scots law trials, I read only an hour at Erskine; the day was given up to a chemical debauch.

"*May* 24*th.*—Was at the Chemical Society*, where we arranged the business that is to occupy us during the summer. Every thing looks well. This evening Dr. Kennedy performed the beautiful experiment of distilling phosphorus from the vitreous acid. Lord Webb and I attended him through the whole operation.

"*May* 26*th.*—Another day of chemical dissipation. Before breakfast went over Fourcroy's chapter upon phosphorus and the phosphoric acid. In the fore-

* A society recently established—projected, he says in his Journal of the 9th May—by Mr. Brougham, Dr. John Thomson (late Professor of Pathology in the University of Edinburgh), and himself.—Ed.

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noon, had a ramble with Seymour, who went over for my benefit an outline of the Huttonian theory. He chose for the scene of action the whin dyke that crosses the strata of schistus in the bed of the water of Leith. In the afternoon, I met Kennedy and Thomson, and enjoyed a miscellany of chemical conversation. I went with Kennedy to see the manufacture of tobacco-pipes, which is a very neat operation. A knowledge of the arts, as they are practised in different parts of the country, is what I am desirous to possess on many accounts; but especially the subserviency of such knowledge to the study of political economy. To collect information from workmen is a matter of some address, for they are in general mere machines, and not unfrequently more ignorant, literally speaking, than the tools which they employ. I may gain sufficient practice of this address in the few manufactories that are in the neighbourhood of this place, to prepare me for more ample opportunities. But I must reflect on the best mode of acquiring this *habileté* of interrogating the lower orders; Locke and Franklin are said to have possesssed this power in an eminent degree; the latter acquired it of course spontaneously by his early habits, the former must have made it a matter of study.

"*June 5th.*—To-morrow my trials take place; I have therefore this day taken a laudable fag at Scots law. For two hours before breakfast I read the title of *Servitudes;* I went up to the court to visit my examinators, and was detained there till near four by a pleading in Morthland's cause; when I came home I set myself resolutely down, and worked for six and a half hours, till I was fatigued and sick of the subject. Why should I not read at all times with the same

vigour of attention, which I have maintained during these six hours? 1800. Æt. 22.

"*June 6th.*—Stood my trials, and passed.

"*July 7th.*—I had quite forgot my Journal; my life for some weeks past has been pretty uniform. I have to walk the Outer House* every forenoon; which gives me a constant headach, and debilitates me for the remainder of the day. I have had three or four causes to study, which have been my sole occupation in that way: even my favourite chemistry has been neglected till this day.

"I have been with Seymour and Kennedy to visit the manufactory of steel at Cramond; we got a tolerable notion of the process, and are to take another view of it next Friday. I hope I shall regularly persevere in my plan of acquiring a knowledge of the various arts and manufactures, on which so much of the prosperity, independence, and happiness of this country depends. The manufacture of iron, in its various stages, presents itself as the most prominent object in such a survey; iron is not only the soul of every other manufacture, but the main-spring perhaps of civilised society. The study of this, in its various relations, is a most complicated subject, and will require a comprehensive survey. I shall keep a journal of my progress in this speculation.

"*July 12th.*—This day the session closed, and I am delivered from few fees and many headachs. The ensuing four months, though usually a time of idleness, I hope to give a good account of; law must be my chief occupation, chemical manufactures my principal amusement.

"I have this afternoon paid another visit to the

* The old Parliament House, the Westminster Hall of Edinburgh.

1800. manufactory of steel, and gathered some additional
Æt. 22. information.

"*July* 17*th.*—Before breakfast I read part of a memoir, inserted among those of the Academy for 1786, drawn up by Vandermonde, Berthollet, and Monge, on the manufacture of iron. Between breakfast and dinner, studied the acquisition of property by occupancy. The law of Scotland has been too well feudalised and *regalised*, to have much to do with this abstract notion. When Grotius, and of course his followers, talk of the *Law of Nature*, it is evident that they stagger between the Roman law which they knew too familiarly, and the institutions of savage life, which they had not philosophy enough to understand. Who had, that was born before Montesquieu? In the afternoon I performed my task, and revised a complete lecture.

"*July* 20*th.*—I have this day for the first time lighted my furnace;—an era proper to be marked in the annals of my learning, or my folly. A Scots lawyer spending the live-long day in distilling sulphuric acid! It is playing a deep game; but I have thrown the die, and my ambition is staked upon the issue. Without making chemical experiments, it is impossible to understand the details of chemical theory: without making experiments of some kind, it is impossible to study the principles of philosophical inquiry; and those of chemistry are, perhaps, the most instructive in this point of view; both because they are the most simple, and, at the same time, are susceptible of much variety. Scots law and science are not therefore incompatible because they are seldom joined. Is there any thing in the charms of science that makes it a less fit companion for professional pursuits, than drinking and dissipation? Yet these,

I learn from actual observation, are not inconsistent with high professional eminence. I wish to study law as a science; and, for this purpose, it is an essential preliminary, to become familiar with the methods and principles of philosophical investigation, as they have been successfully employed in physics, before I can pretend to apply them to jurisprudence. 1800. Æt. 22.

"*July* 22*d.*—In the forenoon, studied, in Hume's notes and in the decisions quoted by him, the *Right of Recovery* according to the law of Scotland. How I thirst, after having made myself master of the law of Scotland professionally, to become acquainted, for the purposes of theoretical speculation, with the institutions and laws of other countries, on the multifarious relations of private right, wherever those countries may be situated, and whatever form of government or state of society may prevail! I remember Gibbon has, in one of his volumes, a note upon the erudition of Sir William Jones, which, in the recollection, spreads a glow and pulsation over my whole frame:—'He was equally acquainted with the Term Reports of Westminster Hall, with the laws of Hindostan, and with the decisions of the Persian Cadhis.' What would Montesquieu have made of such knowledge? Would he have contented his ambition, with attempting to reconcile the philosophers of Europe to the Mosaic Chronology?

In the afternoon, I read, or rather devoured, about thirty pages of the Memoir of Vandermonde, Berthollet, and Monge, on the different metallic states of iron. It is drawn up with great ability, and some parts of it with the most delicate artifices of chemical reasoning. This was rather a deviation from my plan, which is to read chemistry before breakfast, and to study (for some afternoons at least) the iron

1800. manufacture, considered with a view to political
Æt. 22. economy: but I had read nothing this morning. This day I may reckon *six* hours of profitable occupation, without an exertion, however, of all the fixed attention of which I am capable. How seldom is it, not above half-a-dozen times a year, that I am roused, either by the interest of my subject, or by the necessity of an effort, to that powerful energy of application, in which the whole soul is brought to one regular persevering train of thought! Yet this might be made a habit of.

"*August 4th.*—I have been indulging for some days past in the indolence of miscellaneous reading. Taste and criticism and composition have been uppermost in my thoughts; and I have devoured half a volume of 'Price on the Picturesque,' and some chapters of Hume's history!' The history of Britain, during the eighteenth century, haunts me like a dream; and I am alternately intoxicated with visions of historic laurels and of forensic eminence.

"*August 5th.*—Still am I loitering. The late trials in England for forestalling and engrossing, are talked of as such a complete refutation of the speculations of theorists on the subject of the corn trade, that I was driven to re-peruse Smith's noble chapter on it; and I have risen from it once more with the most thorough satisfaction in the profoundness and accuracy of his reasonings. In spite of Lord Kenyon, and the juries who have agreed with him in opinion, regrating is a public benefit; and whenever it is practised with a different intention, or with a different tendency, it provides for itself the most ample and efficacious punishment.

Beside these reflections, the perusal of this beautiful chapter of Smith, on the Corn Trade, has suggested to me the propriety of studying his work as a model

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of argumentative composition. I should imagine, that his style of reasoning, so artificial and yet so perspicuous, so ingeniously minute and yet so broad and comprehensive, would be admirably adapted to the subjects of law. A treatise of law written in such a manner would be a masterpiece; nor would it be less suited, I apprehend, even to pleadings at the bar. Spent the evening with Allen.

"*August 7th.*—In the evening of yesterday, and this forenoon, I have read a Memoir by Talleyrand on the commercial relations of England and the United States of America. That intriguing politician visited the American republic within these few years; and though we cannot, under the recollection of the infamous negotiations at Paris, trust him as an impartial judge of American manners and character, yet this memoir challenges in every page the acknowledgment, that he had observed them with a penetrating eye, and has delineated them with a nervous pencil. It is easy to detach the parade of unnecessary abstractions, with which, like the present French writers of every class, he has thought it necessary to introduce and to close his dissertation; and it requires no extraordinary vigilance to be aware of the false refinement, by which he endeavours to resolve all the peculiarities of the American character into a single passion: but with this caution, and after this separation, I have found in the memoir several most important views of the commercial relations, the domestic manners, and the national character of the United States. The style is mixed like the substance, but the good predominates greatly: for, independent of some affected conceits, and a few idiomatic inelegancies (if I may presume to judge of such a matter), his composition abounds in excellent

1800. Æt. 22. characteristic painting. This Memoir is in Vol. II. '*Sciences Morales et Politiques*' of the Memoirs of the National Institute.

"In the evening, studied some pages of Turgot's '*Lettres sur les Grains*,' with a view to make myself master of this important subject. This has been in some degree a day of study; yet, as in my late days of idleness, both chemistry and law have been neglected.

"*August 10th.*—After reading a little Scots law, I went to sit with Murray, who is confined; we went over together those fine chapters of Tacitus in which he delineates the death of Britannicus, and the first developement of Nero's savage disposition.

"Till the heat of the day was over, I indulged my listless imagination with some pages of 'Price on the Picturesque;' I then took up Turgot's '*Lettres sur les Grains*,' which I studied with deep attention for above three hours. The admirable views that are opened in every page of this little book, not only on the subject of the corn trade, but with respect to the various relations of political society, must afford me incalculable instruction, if studied throughout with as eager and profound attention as I have been able to exert this evening."

### Letter XXIV. TO WILLIAM ERSKINE, ESQ.

Dear Erskine, Edinburgh, 23d September, 1800.

I am lately returned from the Highlands, which I have been traversing on foot; and I at length conquer my epistolary laziness, in consequence of a vow which I made to my own mind in some pleasing scene of that romantic country. I am not metaphysician enough to recollect the particular train of ideas by

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which the blue lakes and the heath-covered mountains conducted my fancy to the remembrance of you, among other absent friends; but you are enough of a pedestrian to have been taught, by the experience of your own sensations, that the picturesque charms of nature impart an emotion which does not terminate in the mere pleasure of the eye; but carries on the mind to every delightful recollection. For myself, indeed, I must own that, in taking these excursions to our native mountains, I am conscious of indulging myself as a sort of voluptuary; for all enthusiasm is surely nothing better than a debauchery of the imagination; and while surrounded with the forms of that wild magnificence, on which I have lately feasted my senses, I feel myself sunk altogether in passive impressions, and hurried into every involuntary dream, either of the future or of the past, that the fever of association brings before me. You see I have not even yet lost all symptoms of what would, fashionably, be called morbid excitement.

In the progress of my recovery, while I slowly regain the cooler habits of a city life, I have been reflecting whether the practice of travelling in search of picturesque beauty has not arisen of late years, and whether it may not be considered as a new source of beneficial enjoyment. In all ages, the poets have studied natural scenery as the storehouse of their ornaments and imagery; and in all ages, men of heroic views must have drawn the inspirations of genius amidst the solitude and silent wildness of nature: the same disposition insensibly led Mahomet and Bonaparte into the same path. But that people of all descriptions should now feel it agreeable from taste, or necessary from fashion, to visit every scene in their native country that is said to be romantic, seems, as

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far as I recollect, peculiar to the present age. It is a consequence, no doubt, of that increasing luxury which keeps up a constant demand for new gratifications; but luxury seems here to have taken a direction that must be attended, I should imagine, with an important influence on manners, and an influence which I cannot suppose to be disadvantageous. A taste for picturesque beauty must be intimately connected with a taste for the productions of poetry as well as painting, and must contribute to diffuse very generally correct principles of judgment; or at least correct principles of enjoyment, with respect to those arts. It is still more intimately related to another art—that of gardening; which, while the property of this country is in its present state, appears to be a matter of national concern. Were the taste for the beauties of nature less connected with all these arts than it really is, it might still be considered as forming by itself one of the fine arts. How much the cultivation of all these elegant refinements is daily becoming more necessary to this country, we are daily taught by the enormous influx of commercial wealth. It may reasonably be questioned whether, upon the common chances of probability, we can expect the progress of national instruction to go on so rapidly, as to keep down the baleful effects of overgrown commerce, and to repress the growth of that odious character which a nation receives from the combination of opulence and ignorance. Am I too sanguine, or am I even correct, in fancying that some good effects may result from a fashion which carries the Edinburgh citizen to the lakes of Westmoreland, and brings the London citizen to the falls of the Clyde? In the course of the religious pilgrimages, some few gleanings of information were picked up and brought home. In the course of

a picturesque pilgrimage, though undertaken from fashion merely, some faint rays of elegant and refined pleasure may gleam upon the mind, and light up some portion of taste.

When I began this letter, I had about fifty different things to say to you in the way of literary news, and in the way of literary demands; but I have left room for none of them, and I have harped all along upon one string, and that one which I had no thoughts of striking. But I must write to you just as we should converse, and I have followed the humour of the hour. If you write to me soon, I shall make another attempt to begin that list of fifty topics.

Ever yours,

FRA. HORNER.

JOURNAL, "*November 1st.* — After this long interval in my Journal*, I can only state the results of my studies and reflections, according to the general impression which they have left on my memory. I shall therefore extend the review over the whole period of vacation.

"I cannot say I have been very idle; yet I cannot boast of having studied with much effect; my application, as usual, has been irregular and desultory. The ultimate objects I have in view are great, but they are distant; their distance has sometimes the effect of withdrawing them from my sight, and their magnitude occupies so large a portion of the various departments of knowledge, that the most desultory reading finds a plausible excuse in the apparent relation which all sorts of inquiry, how dissimilar soever among themselves, bear ultimately to the investigation which I have in view.

* From the 18th of August.

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"With respect to *Scots Law*, I have been shamefully negligent. I really know no more of my profession, than a rude conception of the general outline: I could, with tolerable ease, study any particular case allotted me, but I have not a mass of the details of law accumulated and arranged in my head. During these last two months, I have studied Erskine's three chapters in the fourth book on Actions, Probation, and Sentences; three chapters in the first book on Jurisdiction and Courts; and the long chapter on Moveable Succession: I am at present engaged with that on Heritable Succession. Though I have studied so little law with that dogged application, which I must soon exert or give up all hopes of professional distinction, I begin even already to find the subject more easy; I am getting more into the habit of generalizing and classifying the materials that are so ill put together in the treatises hitherto drawn up on the subject; when I plunge into the wilderness of Kames's Dictionary, I can, with a little exertion, clear the ground about me; when I am immersed in the dulness of Erskine, my eye, after a while, adapts itself to the situation, and a small circle brightens round me.

"With respect to science, my studies have been particularly diffuse; and except a small addition to the mass of chemical details already accumulated, but not arranged in my memory, I can boast of no acquisition. I can scarcely recollect more than one evening on which I really exerted any powers of original investigation; and (so generously is labour rewarded) even that short exertion was not altogether unsuccessful.

"Of late I have been more than usually fond of poetry and fine writing. Scarcely a day has passed in which I have not melted away an hour or two in

this luxurious reading; and I believe I have both given a sort of polish to my taste, which is still very rough, and added a relish to my sense of enjoyment, which is still rather blunt. Virgil, Tacitus, Junius, Franklin, Pope and Montesquieu, are the authors whom I have devoured; and yesterday I found myself whimpering over Currie's account of the great and unfortunate Burns. 1800. Æt. 23.

"*November 23d.*—This is the second day of metaphysics, of the present winter, which Lord Webb and I have spent together. We have begun to read Bacon, *De Augm. Scient.;* and our plan is, each having a copy, to read silently to ourselves, and communicate whatever difficulties or illustrations occur to us. This is a considerable improvement upon our method of working together last winter; which consisted in one reading aloud to the other. Neither the person who reads, nor he who listens, but especially the former, can command that close attention which may be exerted in the silence of individual meditation. A great advantage, at the same time, is derived from the occasional practice of reading together; for each person selects different beauties, and starts different objections, while the same passage perhaps awakens in each mind a different train of associated ideas, or raises different images for the purpose of illustration. This exercise, I am persuaded, will be attended with an important influence upon my literary habits; independent of the enjoyment which it affords in the meantime: from the details of legal form and procedure I shall look forward with pleasure, but (if I can) without impatience, to the weekly relaxation of entering into Bacon's sublime visions. Into this delightful retirement, where I can breathe a pure atmosphere, and view that magnificent prospect which

1800. Æt. 23. he has brought to light, I shall transport myself with delight from the dust, and the jostling, and the loungers of the Outer House.

"*November 27th.*—I have this day finished a law-paper, the first I have been employed to write in any cause of importance; it relates to a question between the incorporated trades of Edinburgh and Leith, and involves rather a nice investigation of some points in the doctrine of prescription, which appear not to have been yet decided by the practice of our Court. The memorial was required of me in such a hurry, that I had no leisure to digest and arrange the general argument; between Friday last and Tuesday, I ran over the voluminous papers that were sent to me; on Tuesday evening and Wednesday forenoon, I arranged the materials and composed some sheets; on Wednesday evening, my clerk was at work beside me for seven hours, and this morning, in an additional hour and a half, he completed the paper of eighty such pages as a lawyer's clerk transcribes. I have noted these particulars of my first professional exertion, in order that I may record the progress of habit, and have an opportunity of comparing, at a future time, the facility acquired by custom with the awkwardness of unpractised skill. To assist this comparison, it is proper to notice two circumstances: *first*, I am not quite satisfied with the view which I have taken of the general argument from which I have drawn the reasonings of my paper, partly indeed because it differs from the view of the subject contained in the papers sent to me, but chiefly (I must own) because, out of deference, I have adulterated my own view of the argument by an awkward mixture of what appears to me a wrong conception of it; *secondly*, I find myself almost incapable of dictating, except from very full

notes, so that a great part of this memorial was actually written out at length in my own hand, and then copied by my clerk. I ought to give some time to very serious reflection on the most expeditious mode of forming those professional habits which it is proper for me to form, and the most effectual preventives against those improper and ruinous habits into which Scots lawyers seem scarcely ever to save themselves from falling. 1800. Æt. 23.

"*December* 1*st.*—This forenoon was spent with Bacon and Seymour. We went over that portion of the first book *De Augm. Scient.* which enumerates the various obstacles that arise to the progress of science, from the defects of literary character; after running over the paragraphs separately, we examined them minutely together, with a view to illustrate them by such practical instances as had fallen under our own observations. The whole passage abounds in ideas so profound, and so beautifully expressed, that I cannot resist the temptation of culling some of the sweets, and serving up another banquet to my delighted imagination. In describing the opposite prejudices of a blind reverence for ancient opinions, and a raging appetite for paradox and innovation, Lord Bacon quotes a quaint maxim, which suggested to me an idea entirely new; '*Antiquitas seculi, juventus mundi:*' whence is it that our ordinary associations on this subject are so fallaciously founded on an analogy, directly the reverse? '*Nostra profecto sunt antiqua tempora, cum mundus jam senuerit.*' Bacon speaks of the evil effects of premature system upon the progress of science, and he insists upon the superior advantage of arranging our knowledge into detached aphorisms, which leave the passage always open to farther additions and improvements. If this observation refers to

1800. Æt. 23. the propriety of confining our theoretical arrangements within the precise limits of actual and legitimate induction, it appears to be so well founded, that no real progress can be made in any science without implicit obedience to the precept.

"In all my future studies and investigations with regard to the complicated relations of political economy, and the principles of general jurisprudence, I wish I could keep this rule steadily and habitually in view. Did not Adam Smith judge amiss, in his premature attempt to form a sort of system upon the wealth of nations, instead of presenting his valuable speculations to the world under the form of separate dissertations? As a system, his work is evidently imperfect; and yet it has so much the air of a system, and a reader becomes so fond of every analogy and arrangement, by which a specious appearance of system is made out, that we are apt to adopt erroneous opinions, because they figure in the same fabric with approved and important truths. That illustrious philosopher might therefore have contributed more powerfully to the progress of political science, had he developed his opinions in detached essays; nor would he have less consulted the real interests of his reputation, which indeed may have been more brilliant at first, by his appearance as the author of a comprehensive theory, but will ultimately be measured by what he shall be found to have actually contributed to the treasures of valuable knowledge. I cannot refrain from copying at length the following sentence: — 'Omnium autem gravissimus error in deviatione ab ultimo doctrinarum fine consistit. Appetunt enim homines scientiam, alii ex insita curiositate, et irrequieta; alii animi causa et delectationis; alii existimationis gratia; alii contentionis

ergo, atque ut in disserendo superiores sint; plerique *propter lucrum et victum;* paucissimi ut donum rationis divinitus datum in usus humani generis impendant.' Must I confess it to myself with shame, that, except under the temporary illapses of philosophical enthusiasm, I cannot be numbered 'inter hos paucissimos?" Of the former motives to the prosecution of science, I must own, that except one (of which I am not in the smallest degree conscious), I feel them all in some degree. Yet the passions which I should encourage in my mind are an inviolable attachment to truth *for its own sake* in every speculative research, and an habitual reference of every philosophical acquisition to the improvement of my practical and active character: 'Hoc enim illud est quod revera doctrinam atque artes condecoraret, et attolleret, si contemplatio et actio arctiore quam adhuc vinculo copularentur.' 1800. Æt. 23.

"In the evening, I read over with attention that sketch of the general principles of jurisprudence, which Bacon has given in the eighth book of this treatise. It suggested materials for much reflection and future investigation. In particular, it presented the idea of a work which might, perhaps, be entitled 'Elements of *Judicial Logic;*' and which would contain not only those general principles of equity, by which the decisions of a judge ought to be guided when cases occur to which no principle already established is applicable; but likewise a set of rules, with respect to the interpretation of statutes, the proper limits of the authority which is due to precedents, and the gradual developement of consuetudinary law; and besides these, the general rules and principles of evidence.

"This day has therefore been usefully employed, though not distinguished by laborious diligence: I

1800. Æt. 23. shall endeavour to devote one day of the week, as regularly as I can, to the study of Lord Bacon's writings, or of works on a similar plan. In this way I may flatter myself with the reflection of making an effort at least, to preserve my mind untainted by the illiberalities of professional character; if not to mould my habitual reflections upon those extensive and enlightened views of human affairs, by which I may be qualified to reform the irregularities of municipal institutions, and to extend the boundaries of legislative science.

"*December* 2*d.*—This forenoon I began a course of reading on the details of political economy, with a view to Stewart's lectures, which I propose to attend. I have commenced with the investigation of the *Corn Trade;* partly determined by its general importance, and partly induced by the interest which it excites at present in this country; when all enlightened reasoners are awaiting that accomplishment of the first genuine triumph of political philosophy, which the candid and liberal coalition of the two parliamentary parties has so fondly predicted. I read about fifty pages of the *Essai sur la Police Générale des Grains.* In the evening went over, in a cursory manner, the general doctrine of the law of Scotland with respect to agricultural leases.

"*December* 3*d.*—This forenoon, after returning home from the Parliament House, I ran through the remainder of the Essay on the Police of Grain. I have perused it in so hasty a manner, merely with a view to prepare myself, by a general idea of its contents, for a minute and *reflective* examination of its principles. I scarcely imagine, however, that it will detain me long; the views contained in it are delivered with so much perspicuity and eloquence, and accord so entirely with all that I have ever believed upon the

subject, that I hope it will cost me very little trouble to select and appropriate to myself either what is new in argument and fact, or what is happy in point of expression. I was not entirely occupied, however, even this day, with the inactive impressions of cursory readings; many passages set my own thoughts to work, and I shall prosecute in the remainder of the week the hints that suggested themselves with respect to the general analysis of the corn trade. Not a day passes over me, whatever be my immediate object of inquiry, without a visionary and brilliant prospect of the position which the results of all my researches will hold in my general history of Britain. 1800. Æt. 23.

"*December* 11*th.*—For some days past my hours have been pretty regularly distributed between idleness and occupation. To the former side of the account, I must place the whole morning spent in the Parliament House; and which I can only occasionally relieve by attending a pleading, or by reading a law paper. On the other side, I may note a couple of hours devoted, after my return home, to the economical details of the corn trade; an hour immediately after dinner, while the rapid progress of digestion clouds the powers of apprehension, employed in the lighter labour of culling flowers from the style of Gibbon; and the remainder of the evening filled up with the study of my friend Bell's* new publication on the bankrupt law.

"The corn trade, the elegancies of Gibbon, and the bankrupt law, are all coupled, in my dreaming imagination, with two glorious visions, historical reputation and professional eminence. I have of late been haunted, likewise, with numberless reflections on the propriety of investigating my political opinions with

* By George Joseph Bell, Esq., Advocate.

1800. Æt. 23. impartial perseverance, and of forming some short rules of conduct in this particular: *solvendum est problema difficillimum*, to ascertain the maximum of absolute and enlightened independence, and the happy medium between the prostitution of faction and the selfish coldness of indifference.

"*December 17th.*—In addition to the employments and speculations described in the preceding article, I now attend Stewart's Lectures on Political Economy, which he delivers three times a week. I do not expect to find that he has enlarged his materials much beyond what he communicated to his hearers last winter; but it is not so much from the detail of particulars that I derive improvement from this amiable philosopher's lectures, as from the general manner and spirit with which he unfolds his speculations, and delivers, in chaste and impressive language, the most liberal and benevolent sentiments, the most comprehensive and enlightened views. Something of this taste may perhaps be caught, by the frequent opportunities of so pleasing an example. His plan embraces the various branches of what he properly terms Political Economy: the general principles of population, the theory of national wealth including an illustration of the doctrine of free trade as well as of the circulation of money, regulations with respect to the poor, plans for the education of the lower classes, for a system of preventive police, &c. He omits altogether the theory of jurisprudence, civil and criminal; a noble field for the future achievements of philosophical genius, and from which even the genius of Smith seems to have shrunk: he relinquishes also the theory of government, because he conceives (in my apprehension most justly) that compared with the investigations of political economy, it is at all events of secondary consideration, and perhaps of subordinate

importance. He proposes, in all these subjects which he is successively to discuss, to remark the striking contrast of ancient and of modern policy.

" Stewart insisted this morning, with great elegance and force, on his favourite remark, that the general principles of internal economy and regulation, are far more worthy of the interest and attention of the political philosopher, because more immediately connected with the public happiness, than discussions with regard to the comparative advantages of different constitutions. This view of political speculation falls in with the train of reflections on which my mind has lately dwelt a good deal, as to the share which the contagious spirit of party disputation almost insensibly leads most people to take in the parties of the day; a subject on which I ought soon to bring myself to a decision. The plan of sentiment and conduct can scarcely be difficult to form in my situation, and with my views; at too great a distance from the scene of public action for a man of liberal ambition to entertain any desire of political eminence, it can be no arduous task for me to fix myself in uncontrollable independence, and, by the intrenchments of liberal opinion and candid judgment of character, to insulate myself altogether from all forms of faction. My great difficulty is to ascertain the exact degree and tenor to which an interest in public transactions and in the general welfare of the state, ought to be kept up; for a scepticism or cold indifference about these seems to me both criminal and contemptible. Perhaps the remark of Dugald Stewart, to which I have already alluded, may help me to a solution of this problem; and I may enlighten as well as fortify my resolutions, by recourse to some of the ancient moralists, particularly the elegant writers of the Stoical

1800. Æt. 23. school. Such resolutions, and such a plan of life, it imports me to form deliberately and boldly; whether I flatter myself with eminence professional, historical, or philosophical.

"*December* 18*th.*—I still carry on my inquiries into the details of the corn trade; I have been much gratified with some late pamphlets on the subject, both on account of the information which they convey, and of the spirit in which they are written: 'Magna quidem, magna est veritas, et prævalebit.' In this investigation, I have enjoyed the advantage of perusing some very full notes of the evidence which the House of Lords is at present employed in collecting and arranging; these notes are written by the Duke of Somerset, who sends them down by parcels to his brother.

"My afternoon and evening are religiously given to legal studies; except the regular relaxation at the Chemical Society, and in the works of Bacon, and the occasional relaxation at the Speculative Society. Four evenings in the week I strictly command; and I extend the sitting for more than five, or sometimes six hours. I have made some progress in Bell's publication; and the arrangements of the bankrupt law interest me extremely; but the loss is, I cannot always keep in remembrance that I ought to prepare myself for business by the accumulation of authoritative details, but frequently awake out of a dream about the illustrations, which I *ought to find* in these details, of the general theory of jurisprudence, and about the prospects which break upon me at a distance of general commercial history. I am forced, in consequence of being engaged in a justiciary trial, to suspend my study of Bell; in order to furnish myself with some notion of the procedure of that

court: I read this evening *Hume's* chapters on *Arrest, Commitment*, and *Bail.* 1801. Æt. 23.

"*January 1st.*—(The first day of the nineteenth century, and the commencement of a new epoch in the history of the British empire, consolidated by the legislative union of the two islands.) During the holidays, I had anticipated the possession of complete liberty; but one half of the vacation has slipped away in the preparation for the justiciary trial on which I was engaged as junior counsel. As it was my first attendance on any business of the kind, I did not fail to see and learn something new; what I learned, consisted chiefly in an imperfect glimpse of what it will be necessary for me to learn. The method of conducting the examination of witnesses; the means of forming a conclusive opinion from numerous, varying, and circumstantial testimonies; and the style of argument and of arrangement, proper for enforcing to a jury a commentary upon evidence; are subjects highly curious and important, and in the thorough investigation of which much immediate pleasure may be enjoyed, and powerful resources accumulated for the management of judicial business. I suspect no book exists, from which I can derive any assistance as to general rules and methods; but a diligent perusal of such criminal trials as are reported, will initiate me into the style of ordinary practice; and the rest must be acquired by the exertion of my own powers of arrangement. I may here notice one trifling remark which occurred to me in the course of the late trial; upon that occasion, all that the prisoner's counsel had to do was to forbear, and to resist the curiosity of knowing the story that was under investigation.

1801. Æt. 23. "*January* 10*th.*—As I have been unwell for some days, and my indispositions generally unfit me for accurate attention, I have indulged myself in the agreeable idleness of poetical and rhetorical reading. The third book of Cicero, *De Oratore*, together with his smaller miscellanies of the same kind, inflamed me with the admiration of fine composition; from the theory and precepts I passed to some examples, and though Massillon's Sermons did not much interest me, my ardour was fully restored by some orations of Demosthenes which I read in the translation of Francis. But my taste found a still more delightful repast in some select morsels of historic eloquence; Gibbon's fifteenth chapter is a splendid picture in its general design, and finished with much ornament and skill; it led me to two noble sketches which I had not before perused, the fire of Rome under Nero, as described by Tacitus, and the introduction of the Bacchanalian mysteries and superstition, as described in the 39th book of Livy. I have revelled likewise in Milton, Virgil, and De Lille; the rich store of imagery and sentiment which De Lille has amassed, the calm tone of philosophic elegance and refinement of diction which breathes over the landscapes of Virgil, and the lofty harmonious magnificence of Milton's immortal verse, alternately supplied me a luxurious repast, and may all contribute to the melioration of my taste and the enlargement of my powers of composition.

"*January* 16*th.*—I attend the Parliament House scrupulously, and am creeping into a little business, which gives me the shadow and fancy of occupation. Occasional consultations direct in a great measure the course of my legal reading: a paper on the subject of judicial factory led me to study with some attention

the whole article of Cautionry; and an appointment to the list of counsel for the poor, induced the propriety of studying in the Acts of *Sederunt*, the duties and functions of that situation. At the same time I keep in view the general design of investigating the principles of law on the various branches of personal right or obligation: when I have made myself master of these, which constitute the body of what may be denominated commercial jurisprudence, I propose to plunge into the mysteries and darkness of the feudal institutions. 1801. Æt. 23.

"Half hours have been given by stealth to a new poem by De Lille, which I have just received from London, and which is entitled '*L'homme des Champs.*' I shall reserve my positive opinion and enlarged criticism, till I shall have given the work a repeated perusal; my present impression of its merits ranks it much lower than '*Les Jardins*' of the same author, though I have certainly been struck with some elegant passages.

"I likewise attend Stewart's lectures, and strive to imbibe some portion of that elegant taste and comprehensive spirit which are diffused over his speculations. At the same time, I confess that I begin to suspect him of excessive timidity on the subject of political innovation, and the practicability of improvement by individual exertion. And I am not sure, if the great elegance and sensibility of his compositions have not in some degree an unfavourable effect in the investigation of truth and the communication of knowledge: in so pleasing a dress, error and involuntary sophistry might insinuate themselves undetected, because without suspicion; and even truth itself finds admission too easy, when the severities of attention have been lulled into reverie

1801. by the charms of the most select diction and the most
Æt. 23. attractive imagery.

"*January 17th.*—I may take notice in this place that I have of late fallen very much into the habit of taking advantage of those short intervals of time, that would otherwise be entirely lost, by employing them in the collection of elegancies of composition and expression. I refrain from confining myself to any one author, or to any peculiar style; but Gibbon's first volume has been more in my hands of late than any other book. My judgment of his style has undergone several vicissitudes; at present it leans to a much more favourable impression than I felt some time ago. I read for about half an hour this afternoon some passages at the conclusion of the tenth book, which have struck me as being very finely delineated; particularly the character of Gallienus, and still more his narrative of those events which, to use his expression, 'reflect a strong light on the horrid picture' of the times.

"I ought here to enter likewise a record of another practice, which I adopted about a month ago, and in which I have persevered with resolution. I copy into a book of a portable size, and in a small handwriting, all such passages, in the works that pass through my hands, as appear to me distinguished by the combined excellences of comprehensive sentiment and eloquent expression. In this practice I have not so much in view, either the effect of thus imprinting those passages on my memory, or the exercise of discriminative taste in forming the selection, as the remote pleasure of revolving such sublime views of science and of human nature, if I should happen at any time to be removed from an opportunity of consulting the originals. At the same time, I am pleased with the idea of forming such a

noble museum, into which no specimen is admitted, but what bears the divine stamp of genius; and I have sometimes flattered my vanity with comparing this labour with that to which Raphael submitted, when he formed his collection of what he called *the thoughts of the ancients.* 1801. Æt. 23.

"*January* 18*th.*—This morning was spent with Lord Webb Seymour in reading Bacon, *De Dign. et Augm. Sc.* We entered upon the fourth book with the design of reading it through; but the first chapter supplied such abundant materials of discussion and reflection, that we did not advance beyond it. I wrote several pages in consequence of a conversation which we had started; and when we came to compare our notes, we were mutually surprised, as we have frequently had occasion to experience, at the very different form and train of thought into which we had separately wrought up reflections with regard to which we were pretty nearly agreed. Our different habits of present study, our different views of future life, and our different plans of literary achievement, could scarcely fail to produce this effect. Lord Webb has just occasion to reproach me sometimes, with affecting fine composition even in my notes and memorandums; and I have taken the freedom of expressing my apprehensions that certain innovations in metaphysical language, to which he has, however, attached very definite ideas, may have laid too fast hold of his associations.

"*January* 21*st.*—This afternoon I studied a case, which I am to plead in the Outer House to-morrow, in which a sister pursues her brother for the provision destined to her by their father. It seems to be a very good exercise both of the memory and of the powers of continued attention, to arrange in the head, without

1801. notes to assist it, the circumstances and narrative of
Æt. 23. a lawsuit. I already feel a difference in the improved quickness of my apprehension in this respect; but I feel, to my utter mortification and shame, the greatest dearth of legal topics on which I might build the arrangement of argumentative discussion. I am too little in possession of law to comprehend in one view of any question, the various relations which its circumstances bear to each other.

"*January* 22*d.*—After waiting the whole morning, my pleading did not take place. My only recompence for a constant and ever-during headach, consists in hearing a few important questions well discussed, out of a vast mass of cases which are either not important or do not receive an interesting discussion.

"The whole of this evening, and till almost two hours past midnight, I was engaged in studying a mass of papers, from a Sheriff Court and the Bill Chamber, relative to a competition between two alleged assignations to a tack.* In its present shape, the question turns solely upon a point of form; and that of course costs me much trouble.

"*January* 23*d.*—This forenoon I pleaded the cause which I studied last night, against Gillies†; a man of a very vigorous intellect. I lost the question; from the demerits of my plea, as I am bound to believe, not from the imperfections of my eloquence. Yet what is that mysterious power of self-possession, which is gifted to some men and withheld from others, according to the constitution of their nerves and blood-vessels? which deserting us, when we are placed in a new situation, palsies the faculty of memory in its re-

* A lease.

† Adam Gillies, Esq., Advocate; afterwards Lord Gillies, one of the Judges of the Court of Session.

collection of what has been most recently imprinted, and suspends the course of those habits which long exercise had formed. 1801. Æt. 23.

"*February 19th.*—During the long period, of which I have omitted to register a journal, my time has been variously portioned out between business and dissipation; though I must confess that the latter has occupied the greater share. I have mingled more of late, than I had been accustomed, with the society of that description of women, who were so agreeable to David Hume; but after I deduct a few exceptions, where personal preference has fixed a charm, I confess that I rather yield to the speculative anticipation that pleasure ought to be derived, than to the remembrance of pleasure actually experienced. At the same time I believe this may be owing to my novitiate in such society, and my unskilfulness in extracting that amusement from it which it is qualified to furnish; it may be owing also, in part, to the very irrational style of company which prevails in Edinburgh, where large parties are brought together without the smallest idea, either on the part of the lady of the house or her guests, that conversation is the purpose for which people meet together. Indeed, from what I have seen, the inhabitants of this place have very little taste in conversation; if a few of those be excepted, who, either by their rank or by their literary pursuits, have viewed more of the world than can be seen within Scotland. I talk chiefly of that form of company in which men and females are intermingled; for in the male parties, there is always information at least to be got, though very rarely conveyed in an agreeable form. In general, the women of Scotland are much less polished in their manners than English women of the same rank; nearly in the

1801. Æt. 23. same proportion in which they are less successful in their dress: there is a coarseness, or rather a want of softness, in Scotch manners; there is more familiarity than in the conversation of English ladies, and less ease. I have been led into this long note on a subject which will attract my attention more frequently in future, in consequence of having lately spent much time very agreeably in female society; though with a burdensome consciousness of that awkwardness which I have not yet seen enough of the world to lose, and of that propensity to bookworm conversation which I have contracted from the habits of my life. A little more practice in varied society will qualify me for profiting by it; and will give me that self-possession and readiness, not merely of conversation but of reflection, which may render society a field for the observation of character and manners, instead of a shifting scene, as it is to me at present, which communicates transitory impressions to a passive mind. In particular, the society of modest and accomplished women may serve to correct in me those asperities of manner, which no man gets rid of but in their fair hands; and may present a constant opportunity for studying some of the most pleasing diversities of human character, and for ascertaining those varieties of sentiment and opinion which the moral circumstances of education conspire with the physical difference of constitution to confirm. A week, or a month hence, if I should review this note, it will amuse me to remark my own anxiety to justify my late idleness and gallantry: the morning walks, evening parties, and public places, to which I have been seduced by my lively cousin and her agreeable friend from Kent, have interrupted in no small degree the perseverance of legal study, and thrown into the shade certain very

brilliant visions of historic fame, professional eminence, and philosophical speculation. 1801. Æt. 23.

"This evening, I worked for about three hours and a half at a paper, of which I wrote several pages some days ago, and which I shall not be able to finish without another sitting. It relates to a frivolous and uninteresting question of mere fact, with regard to the boundary of two insignificant patches of ground; and the subject, on which I have already written ten close folio pages in my own hand, turns upon this notable question, whether a ditch half a foot in breadth and depth ought to run on the east or the west side of a hedge which is not three feet high. When I had fairly set myself to work, I flowed on fluently enough, though certainly in a style of composition worthy of a ditch; nothing but much practice of philosophical writing during the vacation will rescue me from the vulgarism and carelessness of Parliament House papers. I have not yet acquired a taste for business, or its habits of drudgery in detail; formerly labour was delightful to me, when it was employed in the accumulation of general principles, or in the arrangement of interesting illustrations under principles already familiar to my mind; but the composition of Session papers for the Outer House sickens me to nausea. Self-denial, perseverance, inflexible assiduity, what virtues you are! but what exertions you require! That ambition, which can submit to present mortification and to long dull drudgery, for the attainment of remote honour, is like that fortitude which can reason in the midst of danger, the attribute not of man, but of a god.

"*February 24th.*—I have spent three days at Southfield*, which is almost the only house from home in

* In East Lothian, the house of Andrew Gray, Esq., who had married a cousin-german of his mother. — Ed.

1801. Æt. 23. which I have completely domesticated myself. Against the sum total of time lost from study, I place on the opposite side of the account, *first*, much pleasure and agreeable relaxation; *secondly*, an increased taste for the gratifications of domestic manners; *thirdly*, my solitary reflections (after I took my departure) upon the duty of ameliorating personal character and public happiness by contributing even individual exertions to the multiplication and improvement of those pleasures which the conversation of friends is calculated to afford; *fourthly*, the discovery of the false ideas which I have hitherto conceived with regard to the most pleasing and instructive style of domestic conversation; *fifthly*, the contemplation of five individual characters, all different from each other, but all deserving of my esteem in a high degree.

"I went to the Speculative Society this evening, where I heard a very indifferent discussion of one of the most interesting subjects which can engage the attention of a political philosopher; the consequences of a free commerce and intercourse between China and the rest of the civilised world. There cannot be a more splendid prospect, than that of this new world being unfolded to the curiosity and the observation of European science. The discovery which Columbus achieved, hitherto the most magnificent event in the revolutions of the globe, suffers immensely in the comparison. That world, which he found at the western extremity of the Atlantic, was thinly peopled by scattered families of naked barbarians; who, except in one or two spots, were in the earliest infancy of the political order. But that world, which is detached from Europe by the wilds of Siberia and Tartary, exhibits the sublime spectacle of an incalculable population, which, during a long suc-

cession of ages, has been disciplined into all the arrangements of the social union, and by a gradation of which the steps are unknown to the historians and philosophers of Europe has attained a high pitch of civilisation, industry, and refinement. What an immense accession to the science of human nature, will be furnished by the results of an insulated experiment performed on so large a scale! But it is not upon the gratification of curiosity, to the philosopher either of Europe or of China, that our anticipations are most fondly allured to dwell: our fancy is still more powerfully engrossed, by the prospect of a change which will be accomplished, soon after a free intercourse, in the moral situation both of China and of Europe. The mutual collision of diversified manners, opposing opinions, separate experience, will strike a reciprocal stimulus into each; the impulse will pervade the whole system of the earth, accumulating force in the course of its progress; new sciences will spring up, and new arts; new powers will develope themselves, of which man is yet unconscious: but even then the career of human kind will still appear infinite, and their prospects without a a close.

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"*March* 1*st*.—As a specimen of the irregular manner in which my studies are often prosecuted, I will note in this place the miscellaneous occupations upon which my attention has been directed during the course of the last twenty-four hours. After having spent the forenoon of yesterday in traversing the Parliament House, I read over after dinner Lord Mansfield's celebrated State Paper of 1753, with regard to the condemnation of prize vessels, and the refusal of the King of Prussia to discharge the debts which were secured upon the dutchy of

1801. Æt. 23. Silesia. The demonstration of this memorial is so condensed and so perspicuous, that while it keeps up a lively interest, it requires a very keen and constant effort of attention. I finished the perusal about seven o'clock, and went to the Chemical Society; where exertions of a different kind were called forth: previous to the proper business of the meeting, Allen, Lord Webb, and I joined in very active conversation upon the theory of the Economists with regard to productive labour. Allen confessed the same difficulties of apprehension upon the subject which we had experienced, and threw out a variety of ingenious hints which had occurred to his acute mind in labouring to dispel the unpleasant obscurity: the chemical paper before the Society was an analysis of Scheele's famous theory of phlogiston and fire, which it cost me much pains to follow throughout, from my ignorance of his terms, as well as from my familiarity with a different nomenclature. From these diversified exercises, I transported myself to a scene of a different kind; where I was seated for two hours at the *whist* table; a game, the ingenious combinations of which interest me enough to rouse my attention, but puzzle me enough to make that attention an effort. After all this, I went late to bed; but rose in time to peruse before breakfast in a new volume of the *Annales de Chimie*, which I got at the Society, an abstract of Berthollet's recent publication on Affinity; this abstract is very short, and seems equally imperfect, but it has roused an impatient curiosity to see the original work; for the ideas exhibited in this sketch coincide, in a very flattering degree, with that line of speculation into which I was led some months ago upon the subject of chemical action, in consequence of some objections which

occurred to me against a paper of Vauquelin. After breakfast I worked with Lord Webb upon the beginning of the fifth book of Bacon *De Augmentis;* which suggested various topics of interesting conversation: we were occupied at home till two o'clock, but the thread of discussion was farther prolonged throughout a walk of several miles. 1801. Æt. 23.

"Such a review, when feebly and vainly considered, may flatter the consciousness of power. But it is manifest, that were the mind to be habitually indulged, especially in the early period of life, in that course of unrestrained and lawless rambling, it would soon lose the power of persevering attention or systematic study, and the memory would become a farrago of superficial and unconnected information. At the same time, some small advantage may be obtained by occasional feats of this description; provided they be performed with activity and spirit: for it must be of great utility to have all the energies of the understanding under command, and ready to follow the various and rapid vicissitudes of any emergency that may occur."

LETTER XXV. TO MRS. GRAY, SOUTHFIELD.*

My dear Mrs. Gray, March, 1801.

Your fine stamped paper did not gratify me half so much as your noticing me so soon. You would have done it still sooner, and would write to me still oftener, if you knew all the pleasure your letters give me. I don't need to be reminded of Southfield; but I am brought more to your fireside in the old way where you made me so happy, and when I receive a letter from any of you, it is some time before I discover that I am not actually in the midst of my

* See Note, page 141.

1801. Æt. 23. friends, determined to sit up very late, in spite of the laird's economy of fuel, and to drink a great deal of punch, in spite of the lady's fears of my political indiscretion. I have often imagined that your friend Cranston* must have set me down for the greatest traitor unhanged; he probably doubts a little at this moment whether or not I have, by secret compact, sold myself to the devil.

So you ask me about accomplishments and female education too? I am a notable hand for such weighty matters. What shall I say? my honest opinion; which is, that the accomplishments, as they are called, are *not* to be dispensed with. That rational information is a better thing, and that plain strong sense about the affairs of the little domestic world is the great object in female education, together with sagacity and liberality of judgment about such characters and such points of conduct as may affect a woman's happiness, all this is very true, and very important. But the acquisition of a little ornament is not only quite compatible with these things, but will assist them by the taste which it gives: and our tastes in manners and in morals are more nearly connected, than we are always told from the pulpit. Besides, it is the custom or fashion, if you will, to get a smattering of the fine arts; and the girls who neglect it are not always ranked with those to whom they are equal, or even superior, in more important respects. I think *we* are generally as unreasonable as this; at least upon our first judgments, in spite of ourselves; and I need not tell you that first impressions are not to be slighted. All that is necessary in the way of ornament is very soon got, I believe, and very easily. Your professed draughts-

* A gentleman of very strong Tory opinions. — Ed.

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women and players are, be it spoken with reverence, often very tiresome and senseless; though not quite so much so as your very professed readers, and philosophers in petticoats. We are jealous and envious of you when it comes to that; you must not encroach upon us; you have other matters to mind, quite difficult enough in their way, and which we have neither head nor heart to do so well as you can. There is another thing to be said in favour of the accomplishments we have been talking of; that they occasion a little more attention than might otherwise be paid to the elegances of manner. They do not give grace and elegance of themselves; but they lead the mind to take that turn, and then they introduce those who possess them more easily to the women of higher condition, among whom, of course, the patterns of manner are to be sought for. I must add one word more in favour of music at least, which I hold to be something better than a mere ornament; it has produced a very great improvement in the parties of the younger sort, for though not so good as pleasant conversation, it is better than cards; and not only this, but if I judge from myself, it ought to be a part of every household establishment, for the sake of the ready entertainment which it affords. I know nothing of music myself more than the pleasure it gives me; and a march, or a plain song, or even a reel, is to me worth all the skilful execution of Italy: but I should like to have the song or the reel always in the room, to be heard when one longs for it; and as these things cannot be bottled up or kept in a drawer, we must be beholden to you ladies for the gratification.

I am quite ashamed of the length of this dull epistle; in which you will find probably nothing to the purpose, but what you have been sickened with a hundred

1801. Æt. 23. times before. As my pen begins to fail in its duty, you are delivered from my preaching. If I had not exceeded the share I allotted for you, I should have filled another sheet to Harriet; but the frank will not admit of this. Give my love to her, and remember me in the best way you can to my good friend Mr. Gray.

Believe me ever most truly yours,

FRA. HORNER.

JOURNAL. "*April 6th.*—Since I wrote the last article of this journal, I have scarcely made any acquisitions in the detail of any branch of knowledge. My only drudgery has been writing out very full notes of a few of Stewart's lectures on the corn trade. I have been regular also in reading Bacon with Lord Webb; we have now finished seven books of the treatise *De Augmentis.* But neither in philosophy nor in law have I prosecuted any regular object of application. I have, as usual, indulged myself in all the reveries of future achievement, future acquisition, future fame; poetry, romantic philosophy, ambition, and vanity conspire to infatuate me in this oblivion of the present; and amid this visionary intoxication I almost feel the powers of actual exertion sink within me. In justice to myself, however, I ought to note, that these speculations and dreams scarcely ever consist in the representation of external honours to be enjoyed, but in the arrangement of schemes of action, in the systematic distribution of various science to be acquired, in projected improvements of my intellectual powers, and in the systematic direction of this acquired knowledge and of these improved faculties to one great and common end, the Philosophy and Practice of Law."

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LETTER XXVI. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ., LONDON. ÆT. 23.

My dear Murray, York Place, 10th April, 1801.

Let me have a full and particular criticism of Cooke's acting: is he of the Kemble school, or has he struck out a line for himself? Are his powers limited to a set of characters? Every English performer, who becomes a candidate for high reputation, must rest a large proportion of his fame on the representation of some of Shakespear's characters: tell me what Cooke makes of Iago, Richard, &c. I am glad you like the oratorios, however unfashionable; it is one point more in which you and I agree: being altogether as ignorant of music, both of us, as the dolphins whom Arion charmed, or the stocks and stones that yielded to Orpheus, it is fortunate that that ignorance prevents neither stones nor dolphins nor Scotch lawyers from being delighted with the divine compositions of Handel. I used to listen to some of those which are performed at the oratorios, with the same kind of interest with which I followed the splendid declamations of our ci-devant premier. His speeches owed the greater part of their effect upon me (and it was a stronger effect than I was always willing to acknowledge) to the music and rhythm, not of his voice, but his composition: they are no doubt equally remarkable for skilful arrangement and distribution of parts, and that is a merit which I have often fancied I could trace in the performances of Handel. I am prosing upon this subject, in order to lead your attention to the subject while you are upon the spot, where the comparison may be made experimentally.

Pray remember me to Petty. I am surprised he is not yet gone abroad, but you must deem it a very for-

1801. Æt. 23. tunate circumstance for yourself; as there cannot be a more agreeable companion. If Lord Henry has continued to improve that very strong understanding, and to augment that store of valuable information, which he appeared to me to possess when I had the pleasure of knowing him, his society must be equally instructive and pleasing. Partiality aside, would you still distinguish him by a cool, clear-thinking head, a plain, firm, manly judgment?

As to my studies since you left this place, they have amounted to very little; I go on as usual, not altogether idle, but employed about every thing else than what I ought to be. On the subject of law, I have so black a conscience that it is begrimed all over with compunction and remorse. *Poor* Christian M'Kay* still lies upon my table, a huge and shapeless mass of chaotic matter, unfashioned into the form of a petition, to the Lords, unanimated by the breath of her un-fee'd and conscientious counsel. Bell's book, which I had vowed to read, lies still on my table. I was very glad to hear from him yesterday that he had had complimentary letters from Sir W. Grant and Lord Eldon, and a pretty long epistle, with remarks, from Thurlow himself: this is very pleasing; it is curious also, because none of our own judges are yet known to have read the book. In consequence of your request, I have taken notes from Dugald Stewart's late lectures with my accustomed copiousness; he has given the subject of the corn trade a very ample and interesting discussion; Lord Lloyd Kenyon did not escape some very pointed allusions, sharpened in Stewart's best manner. * * * * *

Yours ever,

FRA. HORNER.

* He had been appointed on the list of Counsel for the Poor. See p. 135.—ED.

JOURNAL. "*April* 12*th*.—The portion of Bacon's treatise, *De Augm. Sc.*, on which Seymour and I were employed this forenoon, consisted of the first and second chapters of the eighth book. The second of these I devoured with a keen, rapid, and enthusiastic appetite: it abounds with those views of life and of the manners of the world, which never fail to charm me with as lively an interest as the accounts of a new and unknown country; it presents also a rich variety of experimental maxims with regard to the improvement of individual manners and character; chiefly in that department of self-education which proposes to augment intellectual power, to economise intellectual labour, and to render its exertions more effective. This is a subject which has for a long time attracted occasionally my reflections; but which I have hitherto considered rather under a general sense of its importance, than with any perspicuous or precise view of the means by which it may be reduced to practice. It is more than two years, I believe, since the idea first struck me of composing a practical treatise, which should bear the quaint title of 'The Œconomy of Intellectual Labour;' and which, professing to teach this most important art, should be ornamented and rendered interesting by a selection of such anecdotes with respect to the literary habits and intellectual resources of great philosophers and artists, as may be found either in the accounts left by themselves, or in the biographical repositories of Bayle, Fontenelle, Vasari, D'Alembert, Johnson, Condorcet, &c. The idea is not at present much more matured in my mind, than it was upon the original suggestion; but I still think it a promising scheme, provided the materials be wrought out of my own experience. Indeed it is now high time that my plans of study

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1801. Æt. 23. should be much more systematised, the distribution of my time more rigidly regular, and my literary habits more formal than they have hitherto been; for the destiny of my future life seems now to be pretty well fixed in most particulars. I have almost reconciled myself at length to the resolution of adhering to the solitary independence of a bachelor; I am now certain that the greatest portion of every future year of my life will be spent in my native town*; and I know pretty well in what proportion the months of those years will probably be shared between the reality or the semblance of professional servitude, and the semblance or the reality of philosophical relaxation. It remains for me, therefore, to deliberate on the most effectual means of directing my future years to the attainment of certain objects: how many habits have I to acquire! how many to lose! I have never yet tasked myself to systematic perseverance; I have scarcely been conscious of any successful efforts of self-denial.

"These are a few of the reflections which crowded upon me this morning, while I was reading Lord Bacon; he did not suggest them to me, for I have long had them upon my mind; but he recalled them in fresh vigour, and with a mixed consciousness of ambition and of shame, of despair and of resolution. In the familiar use of his inestimable writings, may I feed these sparks of latent perfectibility with constant fuel, and teach myself not only the means of rousing my faculties, but of enlightening and ennobling their efforts!

"I may here notice that, next to the writings of Bacon, there is no book which has more powerfully

* He not long after changed his views in this particular. See his *Journal*, 23d Nov. 1801. — Ed

impelled me to revolve these sentiments than the Discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds. He is one of the first men of genius who have condescended to inform the world of the steps by which greatness is attained: the unaffected good sense and clearness with which he describes the terrestrial and human attributes of that which is usually called inspiration, and the confidence with which he asserts the omnipotence of human labour, have the effect of familiarising his reader with the idea that genius is an acquisition rather than a gift; while with all this there is blended so naturally and so eloquently the most elevated and passionate admiration of excellence, and of all the productions of true genius, that upon the whole there is no book of a more *inflammatory* effect. 1801. Æt. 23.

"*April* 22*d.*—My legal pursuits of late have almost entirely referred to the rules by which the interests of creditors are regulated.

"This afternoon and evening were spent in the very agreeable company of Sydney Smith, Playfair, Alison*, and Greathead.† It is the first time I have met with Alison, and I am quite taken with his conversation: he appears to me to possess a fund of diversified and miscellaneous information, and to have gradually formed the acquisition not only with the vigour of an original and reflecting mind, but with the temper of a mind happily harmonised, and free from all the shackles of theory as well as of prejudice. This information is likewise communicated not only with the most unaffected ease, and with an air of perfect liberality and candour, but with a mixed sensibility and pleasantry which I have seldom seen so well

* The Rev. Archibald Alison, author of the "Essay on the Principles of Taste."

† Of Guyscliff, near Warwick.

1801. Æt. 23. blended together. If I should be fortunate enough to become acquainted with Alison, I persuade myself his conversation would contribute to the melioration of my character. When I recollect the lights which my understanding has received, and the amendment which my taste and passions have undergone from the society and conversation of a few men with whom I have chiefly associated of late years,—Hewlett, Allen, Lord W. Seymour, Smith, Murray, &c.,—I cannot hesitate to decide, that I have derived more intellectual improvement from them than from all the books I have turned over. Their influence has been the more beneficial, that each has produced a different effect; so that what I have received in the form of habit, or sentiment from one has not only been enforced by what the rest contributed, but corrected also where there was any degree of excess.

"*April* 23*d.*—Kennedy * sent me last night Berthollet's memoir on Chemical Affinities, which Sir James Hall lately received as a present from the author. I have been so long impatient to see this paper, that I could not resist the temptation; and resolved to do nothing till I made myself master of it. That, I find, will not prove a very easy task; I have worked at it all this forenoon, and have not yet been able to acquire any precise idea of his speculation. The inquiry, which he states at the beginning of his paper, coincides very much with the line of investigation into which I was led by Vauquelin's paper on the decomposition of muriate of soda by oxide of lead; and many of the experiments on which he

* Robert Kennedy, M.D., F.R.S., author of several valuable chemical papers about this time; among others, "A Chemical Analysis of Whinstone and Lava," published in the "Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh,"—read 3d December, 1798. He died the following year. Ed.

founds his reasonings are exactly the same cases of anomalous affinity which I collected from different books; but the language in which he states the doctrine is very different from mine, and of course appears to me at present inferior in point of precision. The greater part of the memoir is, however, entirely new to me; and while it throws into the greatest uncertainty many theories of chemical phenomena which we have hitherto looked upon as fixed, and many results of analysis which we conceived to be quite accurate, it opens a new and an immense field of speculation, in which we may soon be conducted perhaps to a precise mechanical doctrine of chemical attraction. 1801. Æt. 23.

"*April 24th.*—This forenoon, likewise, I devoted to Berthollet, but not with much success; my head was out of order, and my attention not under command. The afternoon I spent at Dugald Stewart's, where I met Alison; the rest of the company were Allen*, Lord W. Seymour, and Lord Sempil. The general conversation after dinner was of that rambling, light, literary kind, which Stewart seems studiously to prefer: he never will condescend in company to be original or profound, or to display those powers of observation which he possesses in an eminent degree, but shuns the least approach towards discussion. He told us some very interesting particulars of Adam Smith's character and habits, to which he has alluded but slightly in his biographical account. In the drawing-room, I had some pleasing conversation with Alison; he gave me a very interesting account of his parishioners in Shropshire, who seem to have been in a singular state of bar-

* John Allen, Esq.

1801. barism when he first settled among them. If I find
Æt. 23. time, I will note down some of the particulars he mentioned to me. My opinion of his conversation and character is confirmed and heightened.

"*April 26th.*—This forenoon Lord Webb and I worked at Bacon for five hours; the latter part of the second chapter of Book 8th, with respect to political fortune-hunting, and the third chapter on the means of promoting national aggrandisement, are written in a spirit unworthy of his virtue as well as of his philosophical comprehension. In the one, he is the dupe of that short-sighted policy which makes territorial extension by means of war an object of national pursuit; in the other, he expatiates, not with indignation, but with complacency, on those loose and profligate principles of morality which have proved but too successful at all times in misplacing the courtier into the situation of the statesman and legislator.

"We went afterwards to hear Sydney Smith preach, who delivered a most admirable sermon on the true religion of practical justice and benevolence, as distinguished from ceremonial devotion, from fanaticism, and from theology. It was forcibly distinguished by that liberality of sentiment, and that boldness of eloquence, which do so much credit to Smith's talents. I may add, that the popularity of his style does equal honour to the audience to whom it is addressed, or at least to that diffusion of liberal opinions and knowledge, to which the members of so mixed an audience are indebted for the fashion and temper of their sentiments.

"*April 27th.*—I employed the whole forenoon in writing to the Duke of Somerset, upon the subject of

philosophical language. I had delayed this from time to time for nine months past. 1801. Æt. 23.

"In the afternoon, I read with Lord Webb. He lately came to the resolution of passing another year in Edinburgh, as the political situation of the Continent is still unfavourable to travellers, and as in that time he may prosecute pretty far his mathematical studies under Mr. Playfair. He has challenged me to continue during this ensuing year our studies of philosophical logic in the works of Lord Bacon; and likewise proposed that we should read together Smith's 'Wealth of Nations.' I have agreed to both proposals. His more intimate acquaintance with many facts in the interior situation of the country, in consequence of having travelled a great deal both in England and in Scotland, will contribute a large portion of illustrations which will be valuable to me in the progress of the investigation. I hope to date from this day the commencement of a regular course of political economy.

"*April 30th.*—Worked this forenoon at an answer to a representation*, the commencement of *my* summer session; but did not finish it, as Reddie called upon me. A good deal of instruction may be derived from his conversation upon general subjects of law; for he has studied the theory of his profession most conscientiously as to application, and with a considerable portion of the philosophical spirit. In the afternoon, Lord Webb and I made our second attack upon Smith's 'Wealth of Nations;' and finished, for the present, the subject of the Division of Labour. Our mode of reading is, first to go through each chapter with a minute attention to the accuracy of the argu-

* A paper for the Court.

1801. Æt. 23. ment, endeavouring at the same time to recollect all the illustrations by which we can either confirm, contradict, or modify his general principles: when we have read as many chapters as make a complete subject of itself, we review the whole in a more general manner, and take a note of such subjects of future investigation as seem necessary to complete the theory.

"It may be proper here to mention, that I have for some days past been in the practice of turning over, for an hour, not more, after dinner, any of those books in my room which are likely to present authentic facts, which may be turned to account in the philosophy of commerce and political economy. I wish to impose it upon myself as a rule not to listen to any fact, without an attempt at least to refer it to some general principle; thus reversing the order to which I subject the train of my thoughts when I read any general or theoretical treatise, and allow myself to admit no general principle, without summoning all the details of particular illustration which my memory can furnish.

"*May 3d.*—In the forenoon read with Seymour one half of Bacon's disquisition, *De Justitiâ Universali.* The profound and comprehensive views, which are sketched in the Proœmium of this disquisition, are justly considered, by Dugald Stewart, as the most remarkable flight to which the genius of Bacon soared above the science and sentiments of the times in which he lived: while the liberal and discriminating good sense which pervades all the aphorisms in the sequel of the treatise, illustrates the success of a vigorous and original mind, when its energies are concentrated upon a professional subject, and proves that the powers of Bacon were no less qualified to liberalise

the details of minute arrangement, than to extend and enlighten the bounds of general speculation. What a loss to the science and to the practice of jurisprudence, that he did not prosecute the subject which he has opened up in so pleasing a manner; and upon which, as it had occupied the thoughts of his whole life, the labour of composition must have consisted in mere remembrance rather than invention! It would have been no less interesting, had he communicated his ideas with regard to the theory of government: for he has stated so well that principle of expediency and of mutual sympathy, from which laws derive their sanction, that he could scarcely have failed to extend the same view to the foundations of the imperial authority. It is possible, indeed, that the prejudices of the age, or rather of the reign in which he lived, might be wrought into his habits of thinking, in consequence of the habits of conversation and behaviour to which it was necessary for a courtier and political lawyer of that reign to submit. But the awkward, forced, and artificial manner, in which he apologises to his readers for observing a total silence upon the subject of government, renders it more probable that even in that walk of meditation his genius preserved its liberty, however he might demean himself by a slavish observance of fashionable opinions, or by a still more unworthy concealment of his real sentiments from posterity.

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"This afternoon I gave a second or third sitting to the doctrine of the French Economists, which I perceive will cost me many an hour before I comprehend their meaning in the first place, and in the next place form my opinion on the justness of their principles. I have not yet been able to procure Quesnai's original work. I can *understand* Turgot's treatise

1801. Æt. 23. on the formation and distribution of riches, but I see no reason to admit his doctrines; but as to Mirabeau's *Philosophie Rurale*, of which I have read a few chapters, I can scarcely attach a meaning to his terms.

"*May 9th.*—I have for two or three days past been under the influence of my periodic fit of appetite for poetry and composition. I have read with close attention Burke's two speeches on American affairs; not at all with reference to the historical controversy, but in order to study this celebrated writer's style of composition. While I had Burke in one hand, I held in the other Sir Joshua's Discourses; endeavouring to apply to *my* art the admirable criticisms which he delivers upon painting. I have constantly referred to the liberal precepts which he urges with regard to the study and imitation of great masters; and I repose with confidence on the idea, that the general rules of excellence in all the arts are the same. Reynolds himself informs us, that he received lessons on painting from conversation with Johnson upon poetry.

"*May 10th.*—This morning we finished Bacon's work, *De Dignit. et Augm. Sc.* It is right to consider the profit I have received from the very careful perusal which I have given to this celebrated treatise. I believe it has benefited my mind in a very important degree. It has indeed added very little to my stock of information, except that I caught a few scattered and general sketches of the state of the sciences at that period: for it has taught me less than I expected with regard to the peculiar principles of the Baconian logic; and the arrangement of the sciences, upon which the composition of the work is founded, appears to me not only objectionable in many particulars, but upon the whole of very trifling utility. I have de-

rived, however, from the treatise on the Proficiency and Advancement of Learning, improvement of a different and perhaps higher nature: at least I am disposed to imagine that, in frequenting so long the company of this illustrious man, I could scarcely fail to contract, by the mere contagion of sympathy and by force of habit, some feeble portion of his dignified manner, and a certain degree of facility in the application of his enlightened principles. I cannot mortify myself so much as to believe that, in subjects of philosophy, my imagination has not received some enlargement, my temper been so far liberalised and my taste refined, by the energy and eloquence with which he repeats so many varied pictures of the object, the extent, and the power of knowledge; when he persuades that the ultimate end of science is the increase of individual virtue and public felicity, and insists that this benevolent conviction, joined to the unbiassed love of truth, are the manly motives which justify scientific enthusiasm, and insure scientific success; when, from that lofty eminence on which he surveyed all the regions of learning, he describes the field of useful and of practicable inquiry to be as unbounded as the universe of nature; when he declares his noble confidence in the powers and perfectibility of genius, and piercing with an eagle eye the prospects of futurity, ventures, in those sublime prophecies of which we have already in part beheld the fulfilment, to anticipate the progress and discoveries of the human race. It must likewise be remembered that, amidst all this generous enthusiasm, he is constantly aware that enthusiasm alone is inefficient, and that judicious good-sense is an essential ingredient of genius; he anxiously reminds the philosopher that, it is not his sport to soar among the clouds, but his busi-

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1801. Æt. 23. ness to labour on the surface of the earth; and at the very time that he inflames our emulation by clothing philosophy in attributes that belong to immortality, he domesticates her charms to our cooler judgment, by the admirable intermixture of those plain and concise maxims, which an enlightened experience in study and an acute observation of the world had suggested to himself.

"*May* 11*th.*—To-morrow commences the summer session of the Court: and I have come to a very positive resolution of devoting almost the whole of the ensuing two months to professional studies.

"Habits of professional business, and even of professional study, are yet all to form; I must make them an object of particular reflection. The morning promenade of the Outer House may, I trust, be turned to some account; it ought to present inexhaustible materials of observation upon the means of excellence, and upon the risks of bad habits; and it surely furnishes an opportunity of practising the lesson which Reynolds so forcibly recommends, of studying our own art and profession by the minds of other men.

"Having been appointed commissioner to take a proof, (a new employment for me), I studied this afternoon for four hours the rules of parole evidence, and the disqualification of witnesses: I read part of Erskine's Title of Probation, my notes from Hume's lectures upon this subject, and glanced over some parts of Buller's 'Nisi Prius.'

"*May* 16*th.*—I can look back on the manner in which I have occupied myself during the whole of this week, with some satisfaction; for I have studied law very diligently, and allowed nothing to interfere with it, except the reading of Smith's 'Wealth of Nations' with Lord Webb, on Tuesday and Friday forenoons. I

cannot say, that my application to law this week has been as productive of information as it has been privative of all other acquisitions; for I do not feel that I have yet set heartily to it. My studies have been partly with reference to business before the Court, and partly of a general nature; under the last head I include Erskine's Title of Probation, and half of the first book of Bell on Bankruptcy. How I long for to-morrow, to expand myself in the speculations of the *Novum Organum!* 1801. Æt. 23.

"*May 24th.*—The account I have to render of last week resembles the preceding, which I deem rather a favourable symptom of amendment. My studies of law have been entirely general, to the neglect of two Session Papers, the compilation of which I have idly procrastinated from day to day. I have studied something more of the bankrupt law, and begin to catch hold of some principles; and in consequence of attending the bar of the Inner House, I have been led to reflect a little on the proper style of pleading, but have not yet fixed my taste. I am rather inclined to prefer a close, elegant, didactic form; in which ornamental imagery is very sparingly indulged, and of which the predominating character is clearness, comprehension, and originality of argumentative arrangement; the language ought to be pure, perspicuous, and flowing; and as the sentiments most frequently and most effectually urged, are of the satirical class, particularly contempt and indignation, the pleader should cultivate that manly, liberal, and apparently constrained expression of them, which secures the sympathy of his audience.

"We have been under the necessity of suspending our progress in the perusal of the 'Wealth of Nations,' on account of the insurmountable dif-

1801. Æt. 23. ficulties, obscurity, and embarrassment in which the reasonings of the 5th chapter are involved. It is amusing to recollect the history of one's feelings on a matter of this kind: many years ago, when I first read the 'Wealth of Nations,' the whole of the first book appeared to me as perspicuous as it was interesting and new. Some time afterwards, while I lived in England *, I attempted to make an abstract of Smith's principal reasonings; but I was impeded by the doctrine of the real measure of value, and the distinction between nominal and real price: the discovery that I did not understand Smith, speedily led me to doubt whether Smith understood himself, and I thought I saw that the price of labour was the same sort of thing as the price of any other commodity; but the discussion was too hard for me, and I fled to something more agreeable because more easy. The next incident that I can recollect of this narrative, is the pleasure I received from finding in a pamphlet by Lord Lauderdale, of which Professor Dalzel gave me a copy, that what had puzzled me appeared decidedly erroneous to him, and was rejected without ceremony. Mr. Stewart also devoted an elaborate lecture to this curious subject; his refutation of Smith's argument appeared to me at the time demonstrative, but the principles he proposed to substitute were not quite so satisfactory. The subject has again come before me, and I hope, with Lord Webb's aid, not to quit it without making something of it. In utter despair, however, of conducting the investigation successfully without more materials than Smith furnishes, we have betaken ourselves to some treatises in which the doctrine of money is examined in a more elementary

* He thus appears to have read the "Wealth of Nations" before he was seventeen years of age. — Ed.

manner. We are at present engaged with *Rice Vaughan's* little book.* 1801. Æt. 23.

"In prosecution of our Baconian studies, we read last Sunday the different prefaces and introductions to the *Instauratio Magna*. To-day we began the *Cogitata et Visa*, as an introduction to the *Novum Organum*, by the advice of Mr. Stewart to Lord Webb; he told him that Adam Smith used to say, that the whole of Lord Bacon's views were to be found compressed in the treatise of *Cogitata et Visa*. The whole of this evening, till I began to write this long article, I delighted myself in solitary meditation over a few pages of Bacon.

"*June 11th.*—Since I entered my last record, my application has been chiefly to law, and that in a desultory manner, which is alone practicable during the time of session. I have been directed in my different excursions, not by the necessities of business alone, but by the occasional temptations of curiosity; in the indulgence of which, I have even dipped into the repositories of English jurisprudence, where I have fancied myself enlightened and pleased by the manner as well as the substance.

"I have gone on reading Bacon with Lord Webb, but our economical speculations have been much interrupted by the incomplete command which I at present possess over the disposition of my hours.

"I have again been visited by the passion for composition and fine writing, and I feed the resolution, and mature the plan, of acquiring an habitual fluency of correct, forcible and ornamental expression. With this view, I have made out a list of the authors, in

* "A Discourse of Coin and Coinage, by Rice Vaughan, late of Gray's Inn, Esq. 1675." On Mr. Horner's copy of the book he has made this note, "Written in 1623, and first published in 1655." — Ed.

1801. Æt. 23. different languages, whose works comprehend the various models of taste and genius; and I have rioted an hour or two to-day in the enjoyment of one or other. I have made it a subject of particular and painful attention to form in my mind a conception of the proper mode of pursuing this study; and it puzzles me much, where to point the medium which shall be equally distant from vitious imitation of any one author, and from a motley patchwork of inconsistent excellences, where to mark the line of true elegance, between affected simplicity and affected ornament. I will take care to describe the result as soon as I prove more successful.

"*June 21st.*—My law studies continue still to be occasional and irregular, which will never make me a lawyer; at least of that knowledge which I have the ambition to possess, and of that eminence which I aspire to reach. If I do not execute in part my schemes of systematic study during the ensuing vacation, all those magnificent hopes are unsubstantial and impertinent.

"For a few days past I have been reading a little of Father Paul's History of the Council of Trent; and am highly delighted with the unembarrassed perspicuity of the narrative, the good sense and precision with which the various reasonings and views of the different parties are stated, and, above all, the sublime impartiality and temper which holds so fair a balance with such steadiness of hand.* This perusal I have already felt so far profitable, not only by im-

* "Father Paul, of Venice, is perhaps the only person educated in a cloister, that ever was altogether superior to its prejudices, or who viewed the transactions of men, and reasoned concerning the interests of society, with the enlarged sentiments of a philosopher, with the discernment of a man conversant in affairs, and with the liberality of a gentleman."—*Robertson's Charles V.*, Book vi.

parting improved sentiments of historical taste, but by leading to some personal comparisons of a still more interesting kind. The transactions, as well as the characters, by which the period of the Reformation was distinguished, suggest a very obvious application to the recent events by which the public mind has been agitated. 1801. Æt. 23.

"*June 28th.*—This forenoon I read over by myself the treatise of Bacon entitled *Cogitata et Visa*. It is an admirable specimen of his style, both in composition and in thought; and is more free of that quaintness and childish ornament by which he frequently spoils the finest passages in his works. It has very much the air of a finished performance; as there is great correctness in the diction, and a considerable degree of skill in the disposition of the parts. It contains little more than a hint of the plan of philosophical logic by which he reformed the sciences; but displays a masterly sketch of the state of philosophy in his time, and a bold delineation of those provisions which nature has made in the adjustment of human affairs for the indefinite progression of knowledge. After the perusal of this admirable treatise, I scarcely expect to find any thing new in the pleasing and profound declamations of Condorcet and Dugald Stewart. If it be true that the compositions of Bacon are scarcely at all read in his native country, I could not devise a more effectual charm to revive a taste which ought never to have declined, than a just translation of the *Cogitata et Visa*. When Hume denied this author the praise of eloquence, he must either have forgot that such a work issued from his pen; or that profound observations, clothed with enlarged sentiments and the images of a copious and exquisite

1801. Æt. 23. fancy, will fully compensate the want of idiomatic purity, or a rhetorical structure of periods.

"*July 15th.*—I have now commenced the studies of the long vacation; and the few days that are already gone have been passed in a miscellaneous and pleasing relaxation. Professor Pictet of Geneva passed through Edinburgh lately, and I spent two afternoons in his company; so far as his physiognomy and very general conversation could inform me, I imagine him to have a very active and perhaps ingenious mind, rather than a genius of a reflective turn. I ran through Sotheby's translation of Wieland's Oberon, with the youthful rapacity which devours an Arabian tale; the composition of the fiction is both absurd and clumsy, but there are parts which are executed with great warmth of fancy, and in which the translator has commanded all the varieties of rich expression. This afternoon, I read De Lille's Preface to the new edition of *Les Jardins;* which is disfigured by childish vanity, and by a dotard and querulous egotism; but contains some enchanting passages. I then read Boileau's *L'Art Poëtique*, in which I found less novelty than I expected, as I had never read it before; but his Preface to his Poems breathes a masculine strength of judgment.

"But Law must form my principal occupation. I have taken up the forms of Actions, and have already brought together in my head the materials of a short dissertation on the history of our Summonses. I have no intention to commit it to paper, except in a very condensed note. I begin to perceive that, though all knowledge of municipal law must be sought for in the books of authorities, yet the system is not to be traced in the order of any of our books, but by an original arrangement, gradually and obstinately matured.

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"In the evening I walked with De Roche*, who, with a great portion of general intelligence, is very actively engaged in the study of the physical and medical sciences. He gave me some curious information with regard to the canton of Berne, in which he resided for some time.

"*July 30th.*—I have been reading a good deal since I entered the last notice, but not with the regularity which I have so often enjoined to myself, and always to no purpose. I still must plead guilty to negligence of law; I proceeded for some days with tolerable vigour and interest in studying the forms of process, till I found it necessary to write a paper which I had put off from time to time. This had no farther effect than to stop my legal studies almost entirely; for the narrative of this paper was so long and so disgusting, that after I finished it I laid the whole aside, and have done nothing since.

"My studies in political economy (which I compare twice a week with Lord Webb, though the compass I take in is much wider than he has at present time for, and more in detail than it would be consistent with his plans of life to prosecute), have gone on with more regularity. The theory of metallic or coined money is my present subject; and while Seymour reads with me Rice Vaughan's admirable little treatise, to which we were driven in consequence of stumbling at Smith's fifth chapter, I am going through Harris, Bodin, Lowndes, Locke, &c.

"But I must confess that all my active enthusiasm has been employed on books of taste. The projects of historical composition are uppermost in my mind; the ambition for eloquence in pleading being remem-

* Dr. De Roche, of Geneva, then a student of medicine at Edinburgh.

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bered only in the second place. But it is not in the models of the great historians that I have been lately purifying my taste and enlarging my conceptions of composition: I have read two or three tragedies of Corneille, in Voltaire's excellent edition, and have alternately yielded my imagination to those magnificent swelling views of character which the poet has sketched, and then cooled this heroic fervour in the correct and judicious suggestions of the masterly critic. I have likewise read some passages of Pope's Moral Essays with more care and increased delight. The prefaces of De Lille to his several publications imparted to me, though often perused before, some new judgments and new feelings. I endeavoured to *study*, for it cost no effort to *read*, Marmontel's *Poëtique Française;* there are some excellent observations, but all didactic books of general criticism are to me unsatisfactory and feeble, except those which great artists themselves have condescended to publish; Cicero's Dialogues, '*De Oratore*,' and Reynolds's Discourses and Notes on Fresnoi, are almost the only works of this kind to which I return with increased curiosity, and leave with increasing regret.—I have thus endeavoured to sketch the manner in which I endeavour to inhale at the original sources, those draughts of ethereal inspiration—'*quæ veniunt in aurâ leni.*' I am conscious of some feeble improvement; the dawn becomes gradually more clear and more bright; I discover excellences which I did not see before, and enjoy the perception of that species of beauty with a sentiment which I had not anticipated. I read over two days ago the oration of Cicero, *Pro Ligurio*, and felt myself, in some slight degree capable of discriminating the delicacy, elegance, and masterly artifice with which that composition abounds. In a

much slighter degree, I fancied myself able to distinguish the beauties and defects of a picture, which I saw the same day at Leith, and which is said to be the production of Luca Giordano. In the foregoing narrative of the works of taste which have recently passed through my hands, I have omitted to mention a small publication by Uvedale Price, which contains an essay on Mr. Burke's account of Beauty, and a dialogue on the distinct characters of the Beautiful and the Picturesque; I received from both a considerable portion of entertainment, and was led to many reflections on subjects of taste in which I have a more immediate interest: it is of great importance to generalise our conceptions of excellence, and to bring all the great masters of poetry, of painting, and even of artificial landscape, under contribution to the improvement of prose composition. 1801. Æt. 24.

"*September 6th.*—During this interval, I have been reading much more constantly than for a long time, though not much more systematically; I have been entirely immersed in law, political economy, and history; and have scarcely felt a moment's inclination to read either eloquence or poetry. As to political economy, I have not yet arranged the subject of money, nor reduced to analytic order either the facts or the queries which I have accumulated. I have taken a cursory view of the reign of Elizabeth of England in Hume's agreeable narrative, and in the valuable Journal of D'Ewes: some economical speculations led me to this, but my attention was more forcibly attracted by the dawn of English freedom and of parliamentary privilege in the rude debates of the House of Commons; I have been hitherto utterly ignorant of Yelverton and Wentworth, those intrepid Puritans, whose independent character is equally

1801. Æt. 24. marked by the fanatical innovations in which they deviated from the prejudices of their own age, and by those manly sentiments of liberty in which they rose superior to all prejudice. The history of the Puritans, and the gradual progress of their influence in the House of Commons, throws a strong and clear light on the nativity of the English constitution.

"My late discussions in law have been chiefly of an antiquarian cast. I ran over hastily Lord Hailes's Annals, and perused with more attention his dissertations on the antiquity of the *Leges Malcolmi* and *Regiam Majestatem;* it has given me much disappointment to find, not that these books are less ancient than was once held out, but that it is almost impossible to assign them any positive date. Some investigations, into which this subject seduced me, convinced me how readily I should fall into an exclusive taste for the minute, easy, and valuable labours of the historical antiquary. I have likewise acquired a general view of the election law of Scotland, in Wight's very distinct and ample treatise; and from this likewise I was conducted to the polemical antiquities of the national parliaments. For the just comprehension of this interesting branch of legal erudition, I shall be more fully prepared, after I have established a more familiar acquaintance with the feudal customs of Scotland, and with the general history of the government and the jurisprudence which were founded upon the ruins of the Roman empire. As this more general and speculative view diffuses great perspicuity on the professional and technical examination, I propose to carry on the two together; and indeed have already plunged deep into the controversy, which has been managed with such superior skill by those great masters of feudal

history,—Boulainvilliers, Dubos, Montesquieu, and Mably. 1801. Æt. 24.

"*September* 22*d.*—I have lately spent two or three evenings in the company of James Mackintosh, author of the *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, who was in Edinburgh for two or three days, and lived almost entirely with Sydney Smith. To one resident in the stagnation or poverty of Edinburgh conversation, the *beaux-esprits* of London are entertaining and instructive novelties.

"*November* 23*d.*—I have lately composed several papers for the Court of Session, and begin to feel an enjoyment, which I did not expect, from that state of mind which the investigation of a legal question induces. The analysis of an obscure generality, the application of subtle distinctions, the developement of probability from a mass of evidence, the apprehension of a whole case in one simple view and in a broad light, not only summon the intellectual powers into activity, but impart, in a considerable degree, that pleasurable interest which rewards exertion. It would be important to examine in general the principles of logic, according to which those four processes of investigation might be conducted in the most efficient manner.

"I ought not to have so long overlooked the notice of some views which have occupied my mind, during the greater part of the late vacation. Though I become daily more attached to law as a study, I become daily more averse to the practice of the Scots Court. There are certain circumstances positively disagreeable both in the manner in which business is conducted, and in the manner in which success is attained; and these disadvantages are rendered the less tolerable, after comparison with the courts of the South. To speak out at once, therefore, whether it

1801. Æt. 24. be foolish restlessness or ambition, I have for some time entertained serious thoughts of removing to another sphere of action, and of staking my chance in the great but hazardous game of the English bar. It would take a great deal more patience than I have at present, to commit to paper the various views in which this plan has presented itself to my mind; as it occurs daily to my meditation, another opportunity will present itself for recording those sentiments of which I should be glad to preserve the history. At present, I shall only notice, that I came some time ago to the resolution of paying a visit to London in the Spring vacation, where, after a closer view of the scene, I shall form my final determination.

"*December 14th.*— Five hours and three quarters at law (Hume's Crim. vol. i. p. 306—390.), comparing occasionally the texts of Blackstone and Hale. In the interval after dinner, I took a cursory perusal of Burnet's biographical account of Sir Matthew Hale; which I had not read since I lived in England, five years ago. It filled me at that time, I remember, with enthusiasm; I contemplate the prodigy of labour now with a more sober sentiment; not partaking less of admiration, but somewhat more of despair. I have at the beginning of this note set down five hours and three quarters as the portion of this day which I occupied with law; and perhaps I should not have set it down, if I had not silently given myself some credit for an effort: for, though I begin now to follow out the details of jurisprudence with more interest in proportion as I have approached towards a systematic view of my general plans, yet there are still several subjects of which I cannot always resist the seductions. What then can I think or feel, to be told that 'Hale studied for many

years at the rate of sixteen hours a day, and when he was weary with the study of the law, used to recreate himself with philosophy or the mathematics!' I have heard, from very good authority, that when Hume was engaged in the composition of his history, he generally worked thirteen hours a day. These miracles are mortifying to me; for, independent of having selected a profession in which labour alone will conduct to eminence, I am conscious that from plodding and judicious diligence I have the only chance of meriting excellence in any line: yet neither my mind nor body is equal to such Herculean achievements. 1801. Æt. 24.

"*December 30th.* — During the first part of the recess I have been lounging in some of the more pleasing walks of literature. I read Stewart's Life of Robertson, which is a very elegant and agreeable production; and contains one or two passages executed in Stewart's happiest manner. Upon the whole, I do not think him successful in biographical composition; his conceptions of character, though formed with comprehensive design, want that individuality to which the painter of portraits must descend. His genius for writing belongs to a higher class, but is confined to that; he is not qualified to be the first of an inferior class. This book led me to give some evenings to the study of Robertson's style; in pursuit of which I read, with renewed and increasing pleasure, the second and fourth books of his History of America. Meeting accidentally with Dobson's Life of Petrarca, I was tempted to consult the original work from which it is abridged, the Memoirs, in 3 vols. 4to., by the Abbé Sade; and this of course led to the perusal of several sonnets and canzonés, as well as of many parts of the Latin works of Petrarca. These I had never seen before. They gave me very great

1802. Æt. 24. pleasure, both on account of the intrinsic merit of his letters, &c. in point of composition, and because they throw a broad and clear light over that delightful period in the history of letters, when the taste for the writings of antiquity was just revived, and scholars regarded each precious MS. that was successively recovered as an inestimable benefit to mankind. I should think that there are abundant materials for an historical sketch of the progressive recovery of the ancient writings, and I know scarcely a subject that would prove more interesting to scholars; as it would admit of so much collateral ornament from biographical anecdotes. Such a sketch, however, would probably appear to most advantage in a general account of the revival of letters;—a noble subject, the neglect of which bears an imputation against the gratitude as well as the judgment of all those who, in the present age, owe the light and the blessings of literature to their indefatigable predecessors.

"*February 15th.*—I have been a good deal engaged in writing Session papers, and in studying the points of law which they required. I become daily more reconciled to professional pursuits, and daily more resolved to remove the scene of my professional ambition to London.

"My studies with Lord Webb have been languid in the 'Wealth of Nations,' but persevering and productive in the *Novum Organum*. We shall finish it, I hope, before I leave town.

"Every day I indulge myself a little, generally for an hour after dinner, with works of literature and models of composition. La Harpe's *Cours de la Littérature*, Goldsmith's prose writings, and Burke's inimitable pamphlets, are the books of this kind which I have most recently perused.

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"*March 7th.*—This day Lord Webb and I read Lord Bacon, I am afraid for the last time; I go to London in a few days, and by the time I return, he will be prepared to bid farewell to Scotland. We have not finished the *Novum Organum*, having got no farther than that part of the second book in which the author begins to illustrate the *prerogativæ instantiarum;* but we have worked very accurately through the whole of what we have read, and prepared ourselves tolerably well for the study of the Baconian logic upon an enlarged plan, by an attentive study of what may be called its grammar or rudiments. I must take some future opportunity of examining, retrospectively, the kind as well as degree of improvement which these studies with Seymour have purchased; that it is considerable I cannot entertain a doubt. Independent of the noble subject to which it directed my attention for so considerable a space of time, I must have learned something from the manner and habits of my companion. He is indeed very slow in apprehension, partly from what may be called a want of energy, or at least imagination, partly too from principle and voluntary habit; but then he possesses, in an eminent degree, the truly philosophic qualities of scrupulous caution, unconquerable patience, unclouded candour. From this crisis of our studies what different roads we are to follow! His life devoted to speculative labour and scientific accumulation; mine immersed, *si sic fata*, in the passing ephemeral details of professional activity. He has the prospect, and the resolution, before him, of persevering through all the general reasonings of Lord Bacon's philosophy, and all the pleasing illustrations that can be culled from every field of science. I must content myself in that de-

1802. Æt. 24. partment with imperfect knowledge, and with the chance of assimilating some portion of philosophy to the mass of practical information, and of infusing something of the spirit of liberal science into the gross and unformed details of business.

"LONDON.

"*March 25th.*—I have now been in London a few days, where I am come to form my decision with respect to professional plans. I shall not have an opportunity to see the interior of the courts, because those of Common Law are at present shut; and the proceedings in Chancery afford little information to a spectator. But I hope to see a good deal of the society of lawyers, which cannot fail to furnish much matter for reflections of a personal nature.

"As there is no reason why I should not be confidential to myself at least, it is proper I should confess, ere I forget it, that my resolution is almost matured, and was nearly so before I left Scotland. A conversation I had with Dugald Stewart gave at length a firmness to my own inclinations; and unless I see reason to believe it an imprudent sacrifice to ambition, I mean to enter myself in one of the Inns of Court before I leave town.

"This morning I went to an exhibition of pictures, on sale at Bryant's in Pall Mall; they are the works of the great masters. The great works of science, and the models of literary composition, are made common to all latitudes of the globe, by the art of printing; an Elzevir, or a stereotype edition of Virgil, is to be found in every town and village of Scotland, as well as in the great capitals of Europe. But the divine productions of genius in the art of painting are confined to the seats of opulence. I am entirely ignorant, perhaps fortunately so, of the art and

phraseology of connoisseurship; but I receive a delight, which I can neither express distinctly, nor analyse, from certain works which I have beheld in the several departments of the fine arts. York Minster, which I visited on my journey to town, and which I paced with considerable emotion for an hour or two, set my thoughts to work on the composition of orations and histories; and the same train of reflection was this day excited by some landscapes of Salvator Rosa and Poussin, and some portraits of Titian. The original creations of the human mind, in any one field of exertion, enlarge our powers of imagination and correct our sensibilities, in any other field in which we may be ambitious to strive." 1802. Æt. 24.

LETTER XXVII. FROM THE HON. JAMES ABERCROMBY* TO LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.

My dear Seymour, London, 29th March, 1802.

I was very happy not only to receive your letter, but also to see Horner. You will doubtless be very anxious to hear what impression he has made on the people who have seen him. As yet the only person to whom I have had an opportunity of introducing him, is a very particular friend of mine, of the name of Whishaw.† If I attempted to give you a particular account of his character, I should probably fail in giving you a just impression of it; and if I indulge in general remarks, you would accuse me of partiality. I shall therefore only say that I hold him to be a most excellent critic, and accurate in his opinions of characters. He was very

* The present Lord Dunfermline, and late Speaker of the House of Commons.

† John Whishaw, Esq. of the Chancery bar; afterwards one of the Commissioners for Auditing the Public Accounts.

1802. much pleased with what he saw of Horner, because
Æt. 24. he found him well-informed, unaffected in his manners, and rational in his opinions. Considering, therefore, how little he has seen of this Northern Light, your partiality cannot be offended with these observations.

Phillimore* invited Horner to breakfast, and anticipated me in introducing him to Hallam. I have not seen the Doctor† since, but Horner thought well of our friends.

Mackintosh had mentioned Horner to Whishaw in terms of the greatest respect, and possibly he has done so to some others of the *literators* whom he will see before he returns to Edinburgh. You might be very certain that I would exert myself as much as possible to confirm Horner in his idea of removing to this place. It cannot be denied that our profession is in many respects odious and disgusting. It has, however, great merits; and among the number, the advantage of living in the metropolis holds a distinguished place. Even if Horner should not find himself disposed to make all the sacrifices which so laborious a profession as that of the law requires, he will certainly pass his time more agreeably in the various and extensive society of London, than he could possibly do in the narrower circle of the northern capital. It is also to be considered, that accident, and his own extraordinary merits, may connect him with persons who may be disposed to put him in situations where his acquirements may be displayed with advantage to the public and with honour to himself. If it is ever allowed to any man

* Joseph Phillimore, D.C.L.

† The name by which Mr. Hallam was familiarly known among his Oxford friends.

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to act from his speculative views of futurity, it will certainly be admitted, that these are times in which all persons fond of active and political lives would be desirous to be in that place where the best information, respecting the interesting events of the day, is to be procured, and to be in the vicinity of a scene of action which may eventually be so very important. Horner and I have formed a plan of passing two or three days at Cambridge; and I hope that nothing will occur to interrupt it, as there is at present an acquaintance of mine there, to whom I should wish to introduce Horner, and who would show us the nature of the society at that place, in the most sensible and agreeable manner. The opportunity that I have had of making further observations on Horner's character has only increased my very great respect for his talents and acquirements, and strengthened my desire of cultivating his friendship. When you find rational opinions and extensive information united with integrity, amiableness of disposition, and modesty in manners, the treasure is invaluable. I cannot for a moment doubt that Horner's fame will speedily be established; and if he feels disposed to persevere, he will probably be equally successful in his professional career.

Yours most sincerely,

J. Abercromby.

Journal. "*March* 31*st.*—I find it quite impossible to keep a regular journal, as I once intended, during my stay in London; I shall therefore be content with noting down shortly, when I can find time, such particulars as are worth preservation.

"I have been once to the Royal Institution, and heard Davy lecture on animal substances to a mixed

1802. Æt. 24. and large assembly of both sexes to the number, perhaps, of three hundred or more. It is a curious scene; the reflections it excites are of an ambiguous nature; for the prospect of possible good is mingled with the observation of much actual folly. The audience is assembled by the influence of fashion merely; and fashion and chemistry form a very incongruous union. At the same time, it is a trophy to the sciences; one great advance is made towards the association of female with masculine minds in the pursuit of useful knowledge; and another domain of pleasing and liberal inquiry is included within the range of polished conversation. Davy's style of lecturing is much in favour of himself, though not, perhaps, entirely suited to the place; it has rather a little awkwardness, but it is that air which bespeaks real modesty and good sense; he is only awkward because he cannot condescend to assume that theatrical quackery of manner, which might have a more imposing effect. This was my impression from his lecture. I have since (April 2d) met Davy in company, and was much pleased with him; a great softness and propriety of manner, which might be cultivated into elegance; his physiognomy struck me as being superior to what the science of chemistry, on its present plan, can afford exercise for; I fancied to discover in it the lineaments of poetical feeling.

"I have occasionally attended both the Court of Chancery and the Cockpit. In the former I have heard Mansfield*, a vigorous old man, and Romilly, who stands at the head of the profession (as I am informed by every one), both in point of legal accomplishments, general information, and respectability. In consequence of a letter of introduction from Dugald Stewart, I have seen and conversed with him for a

* Afterwards Chief Justice of the Common Pleas.

short time at his chambers. I understand he lived very much with literary men in the earlier years of his life, and at the same time gained high reputation as a draughtsman; it is highly gratifying to know, that the two pursuits are not altogether incompatible. At the Cockpit, where a committee of the privy council decide prize appeals, I have heard Dr. Lawrence and the Attorney-General Law. 1802. Æt. 24.

"*April* 10*th.*—This day I dined at the King of Clubs*, which meets monthly at the Crown and Anchor in the Strand. The company consisted of Mackintosh, Romilly, Whishaw, Abercromby, Sharp†, Scarlett‡, &c. Smith§ is not yet come to town. The conversation was very pleasing; it consisted chiefly of literary reminiscences, anecdotes of authors, criticisms of books, &c. I had been taught to expect a very different scene; a display of argument, wit, and all the flourishes of intellectual gladiatorship: which, though less permanently pleasing, is for the time more striking. This expectation was not answered; partly, as I am given to understand, from the absence of Smith, and partly from the presence of Romilly, who evidently received from all an unaffected deference, and imposed a certain degree of restraint. I may take notice of one or two particulars, which struck me as the characteristic defects of this day's conversation. There was too little of present activity; the memory alone was put to work; no efforts of original production, either by imagination or the reasoning powers. All discussion of opinions was studiously avoided; this could not proceed from any apprehension of unpleasant discord of sentiment, for upon the fundamental doctrines

* For an account of the "King of Clubs," see "Memoirs of Sir James Mackintosh," vol. i. p. 137.
† Richard Sharp, Esq. ‡ The present Lord Abinger.
§ Robert Smith, Esq. See note, p. 192.

1802. Æt. 24. in religion and politics the whole company were certainly biassed to the same side; neither could it arise from a want of difference in opinion, in deductions farther removed from first principles; that can never be the case with powerful understandings that have been separately employed: I can only explain the circumstance, therefore, from an erroneous fashion or taste in conversation. For I cannot help thinking that the candid, liberal, and easy discussion of opinions, is the most rational turn that can be given to the conversation of well-educated men; it keeps the mind in a course of perpetual instruction, as well as of discipline and regimen for the acquisition of those habits which form us to a manly and liberal philosophy. This style of conversation is, no doubt, attended at first with great difficulties; but the whole refinement of social intercourse consists in the imposition of restraints; all improvement is nothing but the removal of obstacles; and perfection is merely a relative term, to express the greater number of difficulties which it remains for us to surmount. (These general reflections I have here thrown out, because 'the idea of a perfect conversation' has been very naturally suggested to my fancy by the scenes of which I have lately been a spectator; farther reflection may enable me to decide how far my present idea is correct, and farther observation to pronounce whether it is practicable.) I shall only remark farther in this place, that between Sharp and Mackintosh, for example, there seems to me too much of assentation with respect to canons of criticisms, &c.; as if they lived too much together; as if they belonged to a kind of sect; or as if there was something of compromise between them. Their principles of criticism and taste appear to me quite just, and formed very much upon the French

school; Racine and Virgil the models of poetical composition, and Cicero the prince of prose writers: at the same time, they do not carry the principles, upon which this judgment is founded, to that cold and dull extreme, which limits all excellence to correctness, and allows no relish for the wildness of untamed imagination, or the flights of extravagant eccentric genius. I rather apprehend that they even suffer this indulgence a little farther than is quite consistent with the the other ruling principle; their admiration of Burke, for example, is not qualified enough; and their appetite for the nervous or flowing passages that may with toil be detected in the obscure folios of some of our old English writers, '*apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto*,' betrays unquestionably a palate not fully gratified with the milder relish of chastened excellence. 1802. Æt. 24.

"*April* 17*th*.—This morning I at length wrote to my father, informing him that I had made up my mind as to the propriety of coming to the English bar, and stating to him the particulars of the plan which I have arranged."

### Letter XXVIII. FROM FRANCIS JEFFREY, ESQ.

Dear Horner, Edinburgh, 9th April, 1802.

I have been cutting at my quill for these five minutes, pondering with the most intense stupidity what apology I should make for not having written to you before. The truth is—though it is any thing but an apology—that I have written none of my reviews yet, and that I was *afraid* to tell you so. I began to Mounier, however, this morning; and feel the intrepidity of conscious virtue so strong in me already, that I can sit down and confess all my enor-

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mities to you. I must first tell you about the Review* though, that you may be satisfied it holds the first place in my affection. We are in a miserable state of backwardness, you must know, and have been giving some symptoms of despondency; various measures have been tried, at least, against the earliness of our intended day of publication; and hints have been given of a delay that I am afraid would prove fatal. Something is done, however, and a good deal, I hope, is doing. Smith† has gone through more than half his task. So has Hamilton‡. Allen§ has made some progress: and Murray‖ and myself, I believe, have studied our parts, and tuned our instruments, and are *almost ready to begin.* On the other hand, Thomson¶ is sick. Brown** has engaged for nothing but Miss Baillie's Plays; and Timothy†† has engaged for nothing, but professed it to be his opinion the other day that he would never put pen to paper in our cause. Brougham must have a sentence to himself; and I am afraid you will not think it a pleasant one. You remember how cheerfully he approved of our plan at first, and agreed to give us an article or two without hesitation. Three or four days ago I proposed two or three books that I thought would suit him; he answered, with perfect good humour, that he had changed his view of our plan a little, and rather thought now that he should decline to have any connection with it.

I forgot to tell you that I ran away for three days

* The Edinburgh Review, of the origin of which an account is given in the sequel. The first number was published in November, 1802.—Ed.

† The Rev. Sydney Smith.

‡ Alexander Hamilton, Esq.; afterwards Professor of Sanscrit, &c. at Hayleybury.

§ See note, p. 81. ‖ See note, p. 4.

¶ See note, p. 111. ** See note, p. 99.

†† Thomas Thomson, Esq., Advocate.

to the Circuit at Glasgow, where I recruited Birkbeck*, and Lockhart Muirhead, and my friend Dr. Brown† for our review. They are all so lately enrolled, however, that I doubt if we can expect any active service from them for our first number. Birkbeck talks of going to France in the summer; and Brown I am afraid will have but little time to spare from his patients and his botany. We are most in want of a German reviewer at present; without that language it would be ridiculous to pretend that we are to give a passable account of Continental literature: and now I am sick of this subject, and if Murray has sent you his chapter on the *Prospectus*, I think you will be completely master of it. 1802. Æt. 24.

I am a little curious to hear more what you have been doing, and what impressions have been made upon you by the things you have seen and heard. Upon the whole, I hope you will be wearied of London by the end of this month, and will return to us with the good resolution of remaining. I cannot find out, either, whether you are to have any thing to do in the House of Lords, and beg you would tell me as much of all these things as you think proper. For my part, I have no sort of news to repay you with. Brougham is going on diligently with his book. I have good hopes of it now, for he says it will not be ready for publication for two years at least to come.

This vernal weather is so extremely cold, that I cannot afford to sit still any longer. As soon as it grows warm, I engage to write you a more entertaining and more legible letter; on condition, however, that you

* The late Dr. Birkbeck.
† A physician in Glasgow, and an eminent botanist.

1802. Æt. 24. take an idle morning to send me a large sheetful of London intelligence.

Believe me always, dear Horner,
Very faithfully yours,
F. JEFFREY.

LETTER XXIX. TO HIS FATHER.

My dear Father, London, 17th April, 1802.

The chief purpose of my visit to London was, that I might form a conclusive opinion with regard to the plan of coming to the English bar, on which we had formerly some conversation. I delayed writing to you upon this business, until I should be able to give you the full result of my inquiries and observation.

Before I obtain your concurrence, I cannot give the name of resolution to the inclinations which I entertain; but I hope you will not regret it much, if at all, that every circumstance contributes to encourage me in the idea of removing to London.

The information I have now collected enables me to estimate, tolerably well, the comparative advantages of exercising the profession of law in the two countries; and after contrasting the chances of success, the mode of practice, and the value of the prizes that may be ultimately won, I have no hesitation in giving a decided preference to England. At the same time, I am quite aware that, in my situation, the mere superiority of the English bar is not alone sufficient to justify a change: because, on account of the years which I have spent in Scotland, and which would otherwise have been employed in preparation for English practice, what would have been a wise choice

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at the beginning of life, might not be equally advisable at this later period. This consideration would in general deserve much weight; but fortunately there are some circumstances, at present, by which it is almost entirely obviated: I allude especially to the present increase of Scots business in the House of Lords; which appears to me to open almost a certain prospect to any Scots lawyer who should take up his residence here, provided he has acquired any portion of reputation in the Court of Session, and has made himself acquainted with its forms. After having revolved the scheme in my mind for several months, and with much anxiety, I am now satisfied that it is recommended to me, not merely by ambition, which may have first suggested it, but by deliberate prudence. With your approbation, therefore, my plan is what I originally proposed; to enter my name now in the books of Lincoln's Inn, to remain for two years in Scotland studying and laying myself out for practice, as if that bar were my ultimate object, and at the expiration of the two years to take chambers in London, and serve the requisite number of terms. The advice I have received, particularly from Mr. Romilly, is to practise in Chancery; the King's Bench is quite overstocked, and success is there much more precarious than in the Court of Equity. Indeed, from my own observation, the business of Chancery would prove more agreeable to my taste, and more suitable to the habits I have cultivated, than the practice of what is called Nisi Prius in the Courts of Common Law. Another circumstance need not be overlooked; that, by the present arrangement, the same judge presides in Chancery and hears the Scots appeals. I hope you will grant your consent, therefore, to my entrance at Lincoln's Inn before I leave town. The

1802. Æt. 24. fees amount to 22*l.*, for which I will beg leave to draw. This is the whole expense of admission.

I am very anxious, my dear Father, to relieve you from the suspicion, if you have ever given way to it, that I am influenced to adopt this plan by any fickleness of mind. The case, let me assure you, has been literally the reverse. I become daily more attached to the profession, which, under your direction, I made choice of; but constantly, in proportion as that attachment became more firmly settled, my views pointed more distinctly towards the English bar. This I had long felt and concealed; until a question from yourself, in the course of a walk we had one evening last summer, gave me hopes that such views would not prove entirely displeasing to you.

I find it impossible to communicate in a letter the various considerations which have gradually led me to the conclusion which I have at length formed. I must reserve all this until I have the pleasure of a conversation with you. In the meantime, be assured that I have not treated this subject as a matter of light and momentary fancy. It involves all the fortunes of my life, and as such, has cost me during the last eight months much painful and anxious reflection.

That I might be sure of exhausting it, I have purposely considered it in all tempers of mind: sometimes, when I was disposed to be most sanguine of success; at other times, when I was in the humour to despond; as often as possible, when my feelings were evenly balanced, and I could state the case to myself as if it related to a third person. In addition to this, I profited by the opinions of such of my friends in Edinburgh, on whose good sense as well as attachment I have most reliance; Jeffrey, Allen, Lord Webb, and, beyond all, Murray. Before I left you,

I had an express conversation with Mr. Dugald Stewart, who was very decided in his advice. 1802. Æt. 24.

I should be very much flattered if you will take an opportunity of talking with Murray about my affairs; he knows all my thoughts upon the subject, and has known them in their whole progress. I am not myself more solicitous about my own success than I believe him to be; and you have long been acquainted with his good sense, and prudence, and propriety. Except to him, and a very few others, I rather wish my plan to be for some time unknown in Edinburgh; it would only occasion troublesome and idle inquiries, and probably give me a worse chance of business in the Parliament House.

It is with a considerable degree of pain that I figure to myself the anxiety which all this may occasion to you and my dear mother: but I trust you will put some reliance in my prudence and steadiness, and that you will be ready to give a little indulgence to my ambition. I have long felt the ruling influence of one principle over my mind, which I trust will conduct me, at least not dishonourably, through this game of life; I mean the desire to render my success not unworthy of you, and of the advantages which I have derived equally from your tenderness and your prudence.

As soon as I hear from you, I intend to fix the day of my return; I have nothing to detain me longer in London, and indeed I have some business to finish in Edinburgh before the Court meets.

My aunt and sister join me in kind love to you and the rest of the family.

I am, my dear Sir,

Most affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

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JOURNAL. "*April 20th.*—I dined at Mr. Romilly's, and met a party composed of too many great materials to produce much effect: Bobus Smith*, Scarlett, Mackintosh, George Wilson†, Whishaw, and Smyth.‡ Though Mackintosh and Smith associate together so much, their line of conversation is different; and the former does injustice to his own talents, for discursive and descriptive conversation, when he forces them out of their way to an imitation of Smith's smartness and point and sarcasm. The conversation of Romilly and Wilson appears to be quite different from either of those two; never indicating a design to display, but flowing from the abundance of enlightened, refined, and richly informed understandings. The consequence of all this yesterday was, that no one had a full unrestrained course, and the conversation was made up of occasional efforts by all, in which each seemed fettered by the presence of the rest. All this, however, is only in comparison of the expectations I had raised; for the scene was quite new to me, and was unquestionably distinguished by great talent. If I were to describe the merit of each by a single word, I should say that Scarlett shows subtlety, Smith promptitude, Mackintosh copiousness, and Romilly refinement. I mention in Romilly this distinguishing character, both because I have seen in him a remarkable degree of softness and elegance, and because I was rather hurt by a want of sentimental delicacy in Mackintosh and Smith. Upon the whole,

* Robert Smith, Esq., afterwards Advocate-General in Bengal, brother of the Rev. Sydney Smith.

† For an account of Mr. Wilson, see "Romilly's Memoirs," vol. i. p. 433. 1st edition.

‡ William Smyth, Esq.; afterwards Professor of Modern History at Cambridge.

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Bobus is altogether the man of despotic talent in conversation that he has always been described to me; he has something of despotic manner too; his physiognomy, of which the forehead is admirable, indicates both.

"*April 24th.*—This day has been variously and agreeably spent, and, by one circumstance, rendered pleasant to me above many that I have lately passed; I have received a letter from my father, in answer to mine of the 17th, in which he accedes to my professional scheme in the most liberal and flattering manner. I passed the morning at Guildhall, attending a trial for *Scandalum magnatum;* dined at the 'King of Clubs,' where I met Mackintosh, Scarlett, Sharp, Rogers*, Maltby†, and Tom Wedgwood‡: in the evening I went to Abercromby's chambers, where I met, for the first time, Mr. Wintour.§

"*April 26th.*—This day I entered myself at Lincoln's Inn.

"EDINBURGH.

"*May 3d.*—This morning I arrived at Edinburgh. I have a great many particulars with respect to London to take notice of, which I will set down at leisure, before I enter my account of my resumed studies. How delightful to return to the familiarity of home, after the restraints of company with strangers! to

* Samuel Rogers, Esq.

† The Rev. Dr. Maltby, the present Bishop of Durham.

‡ The son of Mr. Wedgwood, of Etruria, in Staffordshire.

§ The Rev. Henry Wintour, here mentioned, was a very intimate friend of Lord Webb Seymour and Mr. Abercromby, as well as of Mr. Hallam and others, with whom Mr. Horner became afterwards acquainted. Mr. Wintour was their contemporary at Christchurch, Oxford, and was recommended by Mr. Abercromby to the Right Hon. Sir John Anstruther, about 1798, as tutor at Eton School to his eldest son, the late Sir J. Anstruther. Mr. Wintour was a man of the most amiable character, of elevated and refined sentiments, and considerable abilities; but his life was prematurely cut short by pulmonary disease, in the spring of 1804. He left children, one of whom, the Rev. Fitzgerald Wintour, is a prebendary of Southwell, in Nottinghamshire.

1802. Æt. 24. return to the tranquil pleasures of my library, after the distraction and dissipation of varied society!

"I look back with much satisfaction to the six weeks I have spent in London. It has indeed occasioned a long suspense of study; but my mind has not been inactive in the accumulation of materials, and I have formed those definite arrangements, with respect to my future plans, which will render my past studies most useful to myself. In this respect, the month that has just elapsed forms a sort of era or crisis in my life. In addition to this important event, my visit to London opened a new field of society, in which I met with many interesting acquaintances, and from which I shall be able to select a few valuable friends. I had an opportunity, likewise, of observing a few of those particulars which the scene of a vast metropolis presents to a speculative and reflecting mind: and I have had, above all, the advantage of knowing, in a general way, the ground upon which, after having retired for a while to a distance, I am to pass the active days of my life.

"From the irregular manner in which this Journal has been kept, I have preserved no very distinct record of the gradual growth of my ambition for the English bar. The early and feeble seeds, from which it has sprung at last to maturity and vigour, were received into my mind several years ago; while I lived in England with Mr. Hewlett. But at that time, there was nothing around me to feed such sentiments; I had no acquaintance with the English barristers, who might have either encouraged me in the plan by their advice, or have led me to encourage myself by lowering the English bar to my observation, and presenting it in a more familiar aspect. Besides, at Shacklewell, I was entirely without associates of

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my own age and pursuits; and I naturally longed to return to Edinburgh, and resume my post among the contemporaries with whom I had already entered on the career of emulation, study, and activity. I felt likewise, in a very great degree, the love of home; I could not reconcile myself to the idea of exiling myself from my father's house; nor did I feel the justness of a remark, in which I distinctly recollect Mr. Hewlett having one day predicted to me, that I should come, like other men, to acknowledge this to be a youthful sentiment, which, without any abatement of affection, is sacrificed, after a certain age, to the schemes of an independent establishment. I may now recognise the truth of this observation; but at that time I felt the sentiments of domestic attachment in their predominating force. I cannot accuse myself, in the least, of any decay in these feelings; yet others, more immediatlely personal, have gained the mastery. But the idea of the English bar, though thus resisted, was not entirely subdued. It frequently recurred, and was sometimes favourably received; particularly during my dreams of ambition, and in my meditations on the futurity that lies on this side of death; and chiefly, perhaps, in consequence of the intimacies which I have successively formed with the young Englishmen who have come to the University of Edinburgh to finish their education. All these occasional encouragements, accumulated one to another, formed a bias tolerably strong and distinct; which became daily more and more confirmed after I had been called to the Scots bar; partly by the observation I made on the practice of that Court, and partly by the advice I received, after I began to communicate my imperfect schemes to a few friends.

"*May 17th.*—After so long an interval, I shall not

1802. Æt. 24. say of entire idleness, but at least of habits very different from those of study, I recover but slowly the practice of application. Had I returned to the pursuits of general philosophy or literature, I could have made the transition at once; but the composition of law papers is so repugnant to my taste, that I submit with all the struggles of a novitiate to his discipline and penance. I am in training, however, towards as strict a course of study, as the necessity of attending the Parliament House will admit of; and as due a mixture of legal and economical reading, as is consistent with the unavoidable distractions of occasional business. I hope nothing will prevent me from keeping a regular and very full journal; as the remainder of the time I shall spend in Scotland ought to prove a critical period of my education. The great duty of self-improvement and of intellectual culture, with reference to those active scenes in which my life is to be passed, occupies frequent and large intervals of my present meditations; and I am anxious to arrange, in one vast systematic picture before my imagination, the labours of professional preparation, the duties of private benevolence and influence, the possible contingencies of political activity, and the certain relaxations of literature and philosophy. I keep in a separate memorandum-book, a set of short notes, in which I record from day to day such reflections as occur to my mind on these important views; these memoranda I may enlarge from time to time in the present Journal. I have prefixed to the other book of notes a quaint but expressive title, composed of two phrases that are the favourites of Lord Bacon; *Georgica Animi, et Fabrica Fortunæ.*

"The whole of this forenoon, I was engaged in examining the papers of a Process, and adjusting the

shape in which an additional one should be composed. In the evening, I visited the Royal Society, where I heard Mr. Stewart read the first part of a Biographical Sketch of Dr. Reid. 1802. Æt. 24.

"*May* 18*th*.—From not rising early, and having a petition to attend at the bar, this morning passed without any legal study. I walked two hours with Brown*, whose conversation I have always found an agreeable mixture of metaphysical subtlety, elegant literature, and unaffected benevolence. I then spent the two hours that remained before dinner, in skimming the Prose Essays of Cowley, which I had often heard very highly commended for the style; in this respect I was so much gratified, by the genuine vein of English idiom, as well as by what appeared to my ear, in many passages, a sweet and flowing melody of composition, that I have resolved to read the volume over again three or four times, till I fix some of those beauties in my memory, and accustom my ear to the tune. Since dinner, I have worked hard for three hours on a few pages of Quesnai's *Analyse du Tableau Economique*, printed in the *Physiocratie:* I am still repulsed by the difficulty of the subject, or the faults of his manner, or the weakness of my own intellectual powers; but I have commenced a regular siege, and mean to proceed methodically by lines of circumvallation. I keep in a separate set of notes a diary of my tactics. By persevering, with patient and painful thought, to examine the reasonings of Quesnai, and by a careful trial of his mode of procedure, by those views of philosophical logic which I have superficially learned in Lord Bacon's writings, I trust I shall ultimately make out an opinion as to the

* See note, p. 99.

1802. truth, or error, or mixture of both, which prevails in these writings of Quesnai and his disciples.
Æt. 24.

"*May* 19*th*.—Of this day I can give no better account, than that I worked as yesterday, and with little farther progress, on the same pages of Quesnai's Economical Table. I can make little or nothing of it. It is some consolation to recollect what Lauderdale once told me, that he had repeatedly left the study of the *Tableau Economique*, cursing himself for a blockhead. I scarcely entertain a doubt that the mode of reasoning, in which it is conducted, involves some fundamental mistake; probably in the misapplication of a species of logic and evidence, belonging to sciences of a different kind. I may be assisted, perhaps, in ascertaining this, by examining those writings which Quesnai produced on the general views of philosophy; such as his Preface to the Memoirs of the Society of Surgery.

"I passed some time in rhetorical exercise; committed to memory some passages of Cowley, particularly that splendid portrait of Cromwell.

"*May* 20*th*. — Law still most unpardonably neglected at home; before I leave the Parliament House in the morning, I rather make it a rule to hear one or two cases advised. The scene seldom fails to suggest some useful observations. I mean to make notes of such remarks; they may at some future period be of service.

"Worked still at Quesnai. My notes grow voluminous, yet I cannot solve the puzzle.

"My rhetorical reading this day consisted of twenty-seven chapters of Cicero's third book, *De Oratore*. The first sentence of Cap. 25. was most to my purpose; for it contains almost the whole theory of fine writing. It led me particularly to

reflect on what is called *Relief* in composition, as well as in painting; and to aim at catching a just impression of what is designed by that technical expression, and of the rules by which an artist should be guided in order to secure it: a few notes on this subject, I have put down on a separate paper. 1802. Æt. 24.

"*June 8th.* — This interval has been employed almost entirely in professional avocations; in one case, I spoke before the General Assembly; and I have written two papers for the Surgeons, which I ought to have done long ago.

"A few occasional opportunities of relaxation have been greedily devoted to more pleasing pursuits; the study of English diction in some of the prose works of Milton and Cowley; the refreshment of scientific details in conversation with Allen, Kennedy, and Seymour; and the contemplation of my own schemes and prospects, in a solitary evening walk by the sea-side.

"Independent of my studies in Law and Political Economy, there are two intellectual accomplishments which I am resolute to cultivate. One is, the command of appropriate and elegant language, both in writing and speaking; half hours may be found every day, that would otherwise be lost, and may usefully be employed in culling beauties of expression, or contemplating the models of composition; and indeed my half hour in this pleasing and indolent occupation is too easily found, and too often exceeded.

"The other intellectual acquisition I have in view, is a ready and comprehensive talent of reasoning; one's ambition is often excited by circumstances that present themselves fortunately, and the manner of

1802. Æt. 25. the present Master of the Rolls*, as a legal reasoner, has given me an idea of an excellence which it may be practicable to acquire. '*Il y a des secrets dans l'art de penser, comme dans tous les autres arts,*' is a maxim which I read long ago in Leibnitz, and which from that moment has perpetually recurred to me. I wish to get at these secrets by systematic study; and by a comprehensive review of the rules of reasoning, and kinds of evidence that belong to different inquiries. I shall be much aided in this by my acquaintance with Bacon's writings; an intimacy which must never be relaxed, if I mean to carry high views through life."

### Letter XXX. TO JOHN ALLEN, ESQ., PARIS.†

Dear Allen, Edinburgh, 1st September, 1802.

I received your letter with the greatest pleasure, and was much entertained with the information it contains. The idea we are able at this distance to form of Paris in its present circumstances, is made up of so many unconnected and sometimes inconsistent reports, that a more distinct sketch, from a hand in which we can trust, is quite invaluable.

You have managed the arrangement with regard to the publication of Turgot's writings in the best way; Constable has written, by my direction, to a bookseller in London about the business, and is willing to take for himself at the least 100 copies. I hope Dupont will be prevailed on to print some of the MSS. he possesses; from the account he gives of them in his *Memoire sur la Vie*, &c., they would be highly interesting.

* Sir William Grant.

† Mr. Allen had gone abroad with Lord and Lady Holland.—Ed.

1802.
Æt. 25.

Our Review goes on tolerably well; in consequence of Constable's own arrangement, it is not to appear till the 1st of November, but more than half the first number is already printed. I wish you would advertise the publication in some of the Paris newspapers or journals, in the manner that you shall judge most likely, if there is any chance to excite a little curiosity about it. Jeffrey has written three or four excellent articles; and Brougham is now an efficient and zealous member of the party. We regret your loss to a degree that I shall not express to you, though we do not altogether despair of receiving a few short critiques on such foreign publications as you happen at any rate to read with care. I particularly wish we had had from you a review of Ware's strange paper on the blind boy restored to sight. Brougham has selected from the same volume of the Philosophical Transactions, Herschell's discovery of the sympathy between the spots of the sun and the prices of wheat in Reading market.

I suppose you have almost exhausted Paris by this time as a spot for observation; the system established there does not appear to be very complicated, and the course of events for some time has had a great air of uniformity. I am anxious to hear what impressions you receive on going into the country. It is there, I imagine, you are truly to estimate the effects of the past, or to augur the probabilities that are to come. You must persist in your intention of keeping a regular journal, which will be more useful in this part of your travels than when you are residing in the centre of political activity; there all the objects have such apparent magnitude, and so much of an artificial glare is thrown over them, that the memory may be much more

1802. Æt. 25. safely trusted than in the tranquil scenes of the country, which are not lively enough to excite curiosity of themselves, and can only be preserved by a sketch taken on the spot. At least, I have always found this difference very great.

How much I envy you the opportunities you have had of being with Mr. Fox: is your previous idea of that character varied at all, (I do not mean lessened) since you have surveyed it with your own eyes, or has it received no other change than that of being more definite? I have generally understood that his simplicity is what is most striking to those, who are introduced to him already full of admiration at his other great qualities.

I shall ever be happy to hear from you, but beg you will not on that account sacrifice any time that would otherwise be employed in adding to the stock of your observations. I shall endeavour to exhaust your budget when we first meet.

Yours ever,

FRA. HORNER.

JOURNAL. "*Sept. 30th.*—I finished, a few days ago, an account and criticism of Thornton's book on paper credit, for the Edinburgh Review; except three very short articles, Irvine on Emigration, Christison on Parish Schools, and an anonymous pamphlet on Country Banks, it is the only contribution I have prepared for the first number of that publication. This Review was concerted, about the end of last winter, between Jeffrey, Sydney Smith, and myself. The plan was immediately communicated to Murray, Allen, and Hamilton; Brown, Brougham, and the two Thomsons, have gradually been made parties. The ana-

lysis of Thornton cost me a considerable degree of trouble; but this labour has served to break up the ground in one of the most necessary fields of political economy. I have given the review to the press in a very rude form, although my aim was to mould the irregular materials of the original work into an useful arrangement; my style of writing is too formal and not sufficiently correct."* 1802. Æt. 25.

LETTER XXXI. TO JAMES LOCH, ESQ.†

My dear Loch, Edinburgh, 7th November, 1802.

I had the pleasure of receiving a letter from you last week; some of the particulars you mention were new to me and interesting. I did not imagine that, in that quarter of England, the lower orders were in such a state of wretchedness. With all our talk of the grandeur and prosperity of the country, it would appear that there is yet an immense field for improvement, even in the rudiments and fundamentals of political happiness.

I hope William‡ got the book I ordered Mawman to

* The following are the articles which were contributed by Mr. Horner to the first number of the Edinburgh Review, published in November, 1802:—

1. "An Inquiry into the Causes and Effects of Emigration from the Highlands and Western Highlands of Scotland. By Alexander Irvine."
2. "The general Diffusion of Knowledge one great Cause of the Prosperity of North Britain. By Alexander Christison."
3. "The Utility of Country Banks considered."
4. "An Inquiry into the Nature and Effects of the Paper Credit of Great Britain. By Henry Thornton, Esq., M.P." — ED.

† The present Member for the boroughs of Wick, Cromarty, Kirkwall, &c.

‡ William G. Adam, Esq., afterwards Accountant-General of the Court of Chancery.

1802. send him; if not, I beg he will direct a servant to call
Æt. 25. with his name at that bookseller's shop in the Poultry. I shall be glad to hear your opinion of it fully and candidly, and your conjectures, if you take the trouble of making any. We are not a little amused by some of the guesses that are attempted by various shrewd readers; they blunder with the most ridiculous cross-purposes. You will not be surprised that we have given a good deal of disappointment by the temperate air of our politics; nothing short of blood and atheism and democracy were predicted by some wise and fair ones, as the necessary production of our set. We shall go on to another number with considerable spirit, as a second edition of the first is in the press already: the first impression was 750, and as many more are to be printed. By all means, let me know whatever you hear said of it—good, bad, or indifferent; this is the main pleasure of such publications, and will indeed be our only recompence, as we give the MS. for nothing. Brougham has concluded a bargain about his book with Longman, who has been here making purchases of that kind; he talks of sending it to the press in about two months. The title, an "Enquiry into the Colonial Policy of the European Powers." That it will do him great credit, I have no doubt; I hope it may be the means of introducing him into a respectable line of political connections. Old Liverpool wrote himself into notice by a seasonable, though puny, pamphlet on the rights of neutrals. Should an active scene be opened to Brougham, I shall tremble with anxiety for some time, though it is what I very ardently wish; his information on political subjects, especially in some departments, is now immense; his talents are equal to the most effective use and display

of that knowledge. But his ardour is so urgent, that I should be afraid of his being deficient in prudence. That he would ultimately become a leading and predominant mind, I cannot doubt; but he might attempt to fix himself in that place too soon, before he had gone through what, I presume, is a necessary routine of subordination.

Ever sincerely yours,
FRA. HORNER.

JOURNAL. "*November 20th.*—Before I proceed to speak of my own studies, I shall make a short memorandum with respect to the reception which the first number of our Review has met with in Edinburgh, for we have not yet got an account of its fate in London. Upon the whole, I do not think we have gained much character by it; it is considered as respectable enough in point of talents, but the severity, in some of the papers it may be called scurrility, has given general dissatisfaction. In the next number, we must soften our tone, and be more indulgent to folly and to bad taste. Jeffrey is the person who will derive most honour from this publication, as his articles in this number are generally known, and are incomparably the best: I have received the greater pleasure from this circumstance, because the genius of that little man has remained almost unknown to all but his most intimate acquaintances. His manner is not at first pleasing; what is worse, it is of that cast, which almost irresistibly impresses upon strangers the idea of levity and superficial talents. Yet there is not any man, whose real character is so much the reverse; he has indeed a very sportive and playful fancy, but it is accompanied with very extensive and

1802. Æt. 25. varied information, with a readiness of apprehension almost intuitive, with judicious and calm discernment, with a profound and penetrating understanding. Indeed, both in point of candour and of vigour in the reasoning powers, I have never personally known a finer intellect than Jeffrey's, unless I were to except Allen's.

"The four months of this winter session, (the last I am to pass in Edinburgh, where I have enjoyed such an uninterrupted course of happiness), will be engrossed by a variety of miscellaneous labours. I have been forced to crowd a greater number of occupations together, than is consistent with a judicious plan of study; partly from the necessity of performing certain engagements with which I have fettered myself, and partly from my desire of profiting by the last opportunity I shall ever enjoy of academical instructions. Of the former class of tasks, I reckon my contributions to The Edinburgh Review, my occasional attendance at the meetings of the Chemical Society, and the discharge of such legal business as may occasionally be committed to me. Of the latter sort, I reckon a third attendance on Mr. Stewart's political lectures, a regular attendance at the Speculative Society, and a course of fluxions and the higher geometry, under Mr. Playfair. Some of these studies and duties will require periodical labour; the rest must be executed in their turns, in the course of a continued application to business.

"I wish to attend the Speculative Society very regularly, because I am satisfied that I have already derived great benefit from the exercises of that place, and still entertain hopes of receiving further improvement. In general, I shall leave myself, as I have hitherto always done, to the extemporaneous

efforts of the evening; but it would be very advantageous to prepare myself upon one or two of the best questions: this, I observe, is the plan which Brougham follows. 1802. Æt. 25.

"I attend Mr. Stewart's lectures on political economy, that I may complete my notes of his course, and that I may impress myself fully with the general manner in which he considers a subject, which, if my visionary prospects should ever be realised, will occupy in some degree the last part of my life; and which will continue to amuse and exercise my mind, though I should remain for ever in obscure inactivity.

"My mathematical studies, which I am about to resume for a little, after an interval of five years, form the most striking deviation from my appropriate pursuits. It is not with a view, however, to mathematical knowledge merely, or even to a future intimacy with physical science, that I have resolved to place myself under Mr. Playfair; but as forming a necessary part of that survey, in which I have occasionally been employed for two or three years past, of the general field of the sciences, and of the logical methods that are suited to various investigations. The study of Lord Bacon's writings is still uppermost in my mind, and that with an ultimate and steady view towards the philosophy of legislation. The calculus of fluxions, and the theory of curves, may appear remote enough from such an object; but my intention is to get a knowledge only of the instrument, and of the principles upon which it works, not to learn the manual and ready use of it. It is as a chapter in the great system of logic that I wish to understand the transcendental geometry; and it is with my eyes bent upon the philosophy of politics and law, that I have

1802. Æt. 25. always been studying that system. I am quite sensible, however, of the truth of what Mr. Playfair remarked, (when I gave him a general hint of the views with which I was to enter upon this subject), that the principles of the instrument cannot be clearly understood, or even its construction fully seen, until a person has put his hand to it, and acquired a tolerable dexterity in the use of it. I must no doubt submit to the condition; but if I keep my purpose vigilantly in remembrance, it may perhaps exact itself less strictly, than upon one whose primary object is different. In the same conversation, Mr. Playfair used another illustration, borrowed from that science, which he has lately prosecuted with so much ardour, and adorned by one of the most elegant compositions that has ever appeared in physical philosophy*: the study of the higher mathematics, for the purpose of tracing their principles and general relations, is like traversing a great range of mountains; the individual objects are themselves so great, that you must ascend to a great elevation, before you can observe the chain. The image is fine and appropriate; it will not, however, be necessary for me to collect all the curious minerals with which the valleys may abound, but to make for the height with all expedition, as soon as I have accurately traced the great lines of stratification.

"In the remaining articles, which I consider rather as tasks than as studies which I would now willingly undertake, I must make the performance of duty subservient to intellectual exercise. Law papers and speeches may strengthen and correct my habits of legal business; the Chemical Society may, in a slight

* The Illustrations of the Huttonian Theory. — Ed.

degree, give me some practice of chemical discussion; and the reviews may refine and quicken my habits of composition. 1802. Æt. 25.

"*November 30th.*—This day I made a slight deviation from my regular plan, in order to peruse the account of Reid's Life and Writings by Mr. Stewart. It proved, however, a less remote digression than I thought of; as it contains some important reflections on the proper method of philosophizing, which in a great measure forms the general object to which I have devoted this winter. If Dr. Reid understood the spirit of the inductive logic so fully, and prosecuted it so faithfully, as Mr. Stewart has represented him, the study of his writings will greatly facilitate my future plan; and I must at least include a perusal of them in the execution of my general schemes. I read them formerly, but without any such purpose. Political science can only be prosecuted after the manner of the Baconian logic, and the practice of that must be most effectually learned from good models; it will be of inestimable value indeed, if to those we already possess in some of the physical sciences, may be added existing models of philosophical investigations relative to mind. But farther, political science ought to be erected on the philosophy of the human mind, as its basis; and the study of what has been ascertained in the latter is the only introduction to discoveries in the former. These are great truths, of which I am apprized rather in the gross, than specifically; by a patient study of the principles of logic, and by a sedulous acquisition of what has been already performed in the science of individual man, as well as in that of politics, I must labour to define their extent, and to trace their mutual relations. The remark of Mr. Playfair, with respect to the study of the geometrical

1802. Æt. 25. methods, will equally apply to those of moral science; and it is necessary to traverse minutely the individual objects, before we can hope to contemplate their relative position.

"In the composition of Mr. Stewart, I have pitched upon two passages which I shall set down here, because they awakened a train of personal reflections.

"'It is with no common feelings of respect and of 'gratitude, that I now recal the names of those to 'whom I owe my first attachment to these studies, 'and *the happiness of a liberal occupation, superior to 'the more aspiring aims of a servile ambition.*'*

"Sentiments of this import exert a kind of illusion over me, which might prove fatal to my professional schemes; but, if duly tempered, cannot fail, by being habituated in my thoughts, to impart consistency and purity to that mixed line of activity and speculation which I have, too fondly perhaps, chalked out for myself.

"'But I, too, have designs and enterprises of my 'own; and the execution of these (which alas! 'swell in magnitude, as the time for their accom-'plishment hastens to a period), claims at length, 'an undivided attention. Yet I should not look 'back on the past with regret, if I could indulge the 'hope, that the facts which it has been my province 'to record,—by displaying those fair rewards of 'extensive usefulness, and of permanent fame, which 'talents and industry, when worthily directed, can-'not fail to secure,—may contribute, in one single 'instance, to foster the proud and virtuous inde-'pendence of genius; or amidst the gloom of poverty 'and solitude, to gild the distant prospect of the

* Stewart's Biographical Memoirs, quarto, 1811; Life of Reid, page 425.—Ed.

'unfriended scholar, whose laurels are now slowly 1802.
'ripening in the unnoticed privacy of humble life.'" * Æt. 25.

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After this date, there is no entry in Mr. Horner's Journal, until the 2d of April, 1803; and from that time there are only occasional notes, at distant intervals, during the three following years: the Journal ceases entirely on the 23d of June, 1806.

About this time, he was getting the family arms cut upon a seal, and there being no motto, he adopted one,—"*Nitor in adversum.*" It is probable that he had in his mind the following passage in Burke:—"I was not, like his Grace of Bedford, swaddled, and rocked, and dandled into a legislator; '*Nitor in adversum*' is the motto for a man like me."†

### Letter XXXII. TO JAMES LOCH, ESQ.

Edinburgh, 12th December, 1802.

Many thanks, my dear Loch, for your entertaining letters; they have afforded me an agreeable relaxation, during a good deal of hard work. If it had not been for this, which engrosses my time, I should have answered your former letter sooner. The account you give of the projected improvements in London is very splendid; too magnificent, I fear, to be carried into complete execution at once; but even a part of such a plan will be immense, worthy of such a metropolis: we may look upon these as

* Life of Reid, page 521.—Ed.

† "Letter from the Right Hon. Edmund Burke to a Noble Lord, on the Attacks made upon him and his Pension, in the House of Lords, by the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale."—*Burke's Works*, vol. vii. p. 397.—Ed.

1802. Æt. 25. the first fruits of that peace, which some would labour already to deprive us of. These public works afford me a farther pleasure of a different kind; as I look upon our foreign commerce, in its present extent, to be only a temporary advantage, it is of importance that the wealth it at present produces should be fixed and embodied in our own country, either by multiplying the facilities of internal trade, or by enlarging the capital vested in agriculture. Whatever indeed is employed upon the first of these purposes, indirectly promotes the other.

I am indebted to you for the pains you have taken to make inquiries about the reception of our review. Though to all of us it is only a matter of temporary amusement, and subordinate occupation, we cannot of course be indifferent about the fate of our attempt at reputation. We have certainly no reason to be dissatisfied with its degree of success; though, by the mismanagement of our publisher in London, it has scarcely got into circulation there. The opinions that have reached us as to its merits are pretty uniform; Jeffrey's papers being most admired, as they fully deserve to be; and exception being in general made to the tone and manner of certain articles, which most of us, before they were printed, considered as exceptionable on that very account.

I am much interested by your notes of political intelligence,—never was there a period when one, who cares very little about men or parties, except as connected with the fate of leading objects, ought to feel a more lively curiosity: we are surely at a moment of crisis. The question of peace or war, except as determined by that of practicability, is surely far from being quite clear; if there is any foundation for what is called the doctrine of the Balance of Power, we have not, since the days of King William, seen an

era when the application of that theory to existing circumstances was more important. Fox's second speech afforded me much pleasure; the older that man becomes, he seems to acquire a greater dignity of character,—the opportunities of retirement seem to have conspired with the growth of years, in cleansing his fine understanding of that intemperance by which it was often clouded, as well as in leading him to those comprehensive and philosophical views of political transactions, in which he appears to have been deficient in the early part of his life. For a long time I have not been so pleased with any circumstance, as the observation of this refinement of Fox's manner in parliament, coupled with the anecdote you give me of the lively interest he takes in the political events of the day. Has any thing more been reported lately about his *history?* Has the *second* speech been published? Send me a particular account of the debate on the Estimates, especially of Fox's leading positions and views of the subject; such, I mean, as the newspaper reporters never think of seizing.

1802. Æt. 25.

I have another commission for you, which I beg you will set about without loss of time, if you have any time to spare. This you may do the better, as it will not carry you out of your own chambers. I am engaged as a junior counsel in the Aberdeen case; the trial of the officers and soldiers for having shot some people last king's birthday. Now I want very much to know what English cases there are, on homicide by soldiers on duty, and on homicide by soldiers without proclamation under the Riot Act. I have looked into the last edition of Hawkins, (Leach's), and do not find an allusion to such a point; though in our more limited code of criminal

1803. Æt. 25. law, we have a considerable number of such cases, from that of Captain Porteous downwards.

Have you good authority for your anecdote of Lord Grenville and the Poor Laws? I should like to believe it. If you have seen any thing published on that subject lately, let me know: I have got a paper to write during the holidays on a very general question, which has excited a good deal of interest among the tenantry and landed gentlemen, whether, under the existing Scottish Acts, relief was legally afforded, during the scarcity, to the industrious poor.

You will be apt to infer that I have with all this much law business on hand; but happily it is by no means so, as I have *no time* for it; what I have got is fortunately as you see, of a pleasant kind. But as this is my last winter of Edinburgh College, where I have spent so many useful and happy years, and where I could very agreeably spend my lifetime, I have taken the opportunity of attending Stewart's political lectures, and Playfair's third class on the higher geometry. With my share of the review, you may guess I have quite enough to do.

Yours, &c.

FRA. HORNER.

*Extract from a Letter to Mr. Loch, 24th January.*

"This day we publish a second number of our review. I think you will find it free, at least nearly so, from some of the objections that were most strongly, and all of them justly, urged against the former. There are scarcely any insignificant books, —no sermons—few personalities—the general train of criticism less abusive. We are not indeed quite

purified of all our gross faults, but the opinion of our friends has made a considerable impression upon us. I think this number has no articles so good as some of the last; but there is a good deal of careful disquisition."* 1803. Æt. 25.

"LONDON.

JOURNAL. "*April 2d.*—I have now been about a fortnight in London, where I am at length fixed for life. But I have had no leisure to form any immediate plans of study, having been occupied for more than a week with some business before a Committee of the House of Commons. Yesterday I made my first speech in England; the subject was humble, manure, and a turnpike road. Such a committee is not a very formidable audience to address.

"I must now set myself to write a few articles for the Edinburgh Review, of which engagement I heartily wish I were rid.†

"*April 3d.* This morning I passed at Whishaw's chambers, where I was introduced to Dumont‡, and enjoyed a conversation of three hours. I mark the date of my introduction to Dumont, because he is a remarkable person, and I may perhaps have it in my power to know him well. He appears to be at present an excellent composition of the English and French qualities for conversation; which is just saying that he is a Genevese, without the defects of a Genevese understanding, curious research about

* The following is the only article contributed by Mr. Horner to this number:—
"Principes d'Economie Politique. Par N. F. Canard."—ED.

† Mr. Horner contributed to the 3d number, published in April, 1803, a review of "Essays on Miscellaneous Subjects. By Sir John Sinclair."—ED.

‡ M. Etienne Dumont, of Geneva.

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trifles, unseasonable sensibility, and a passion for theory and system.

"*April 9th.*—I am returned from Mr. Adam's* cottage in Richmond Park, where I have spent two days. A delightful situation! A delightful family! An uninterrupted flow of cheerfulness, without affectation, and without noise. It is in this domestic, or patriarchal character, that Adam appears to most advantage. At present, he takes to the country, with all the playfulness of a schoolboy, escaping from the bustle and toil of the election committees.

"*April 10th.*—Began to read English Law—two hours and a half; ran through three or four chapters of Blackstone's second volume on Real Property.

"*April 11th.*—Three hours at Blackstone—one before breakfast.

"*April 12th.*—Four hours and a half at law; began Coke upon Lyttleton, and read the first section. Coke seems very wandering and digressive; Lyttleton most distinct and precise."

### Letter XXXIII. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, London, 20th May, 1803.

I heard of your safe journey as far as York, and take it for granted you got well home.

So war is at length declared, and I suppose you will have seen the papers laid before Parliament before you receive this. All the world is going to the debate on Monday, which, it is expected, will last two days. There will be great difficulty in obtaining a seat; but I am to make the attempt with two very agreeable companions, Mackintosh and Lord Webb. If we get into the gallery, their conversation will

* The Right Hon. William Adam.

lighten the ennui of waiting seven or eight hours. Pitt is certainly to come forward; and he is still so much connected with Grenville on the one hand and Addington on the other, that there are (as it were) four parties, all of whom must be heard. Fox is gone to St. Anne's Hill for a day or two, but is to meet his troops on Sunday evening at Parsloe's. The impression which the papers have made is various; many people who have a profound contempt for the Doctor, think he has made out a better case than they expected: others, that he has exactly made out the case of the Grenville party. I am studying this very critical and momentous question with as much anxiety, as I ever investigated any point of mere speculation; a trouble which I have hitherto very seldom taken with any of my political opinions. That you have perhaps suspected all along, from my confidence. 1803. Æt. 25.

Windham attacked the minister most fiercely last night; in a speech of indignant self-defence, he asked if he had not given the House eight out of the nine motions which the honourable gentleman supported? The idea, of the *Doctor* having given the House eight *motions* tickled the whole patient so irresistibly, that he was made quite angry. Kinnaird* laughed so much louder than the rest, that he turned towards him, and said he claimed the protection of the chair; if the gentleman had any thing to object to in his conduct, he begged him to do it on his legs. Jekyll is a mischievous fellow; he says that Grey, in wording his motions, had duly attended to the decorum of professional expression; he had moved for the papers relating to the retention and evacuation of the Cape.

Tell me how my dear Jeffrey looks in his wig. I

* The Hon. Charles Kinnaird, afterwards Lord Kinnaird.

1803. Æt. 25. propose he should be engraved in that attire, for the next volume of the Edinburgh Review. I shall write to him and to Smith to-morrow. Pray write to me very often.

Affectionately yours,
FRA. HORNER.

LETTER XXXIV. TO THOMAS THOMSON, ESQ., EDINBURGH.

Dear Thomson, London, 24th May, 1803.

I have inquired about Bentham's tracts, of which you wish to have a collection; they are very scarce, and I have only been able to get one. I shall not, however, despair of success, as I shall soon have a footing, if I go on, in every bookseller's shop and stall in and about London.

I have seen a good deal of Mackintosh, since I came to London; he is at present quite full of his expedition to the East, and of his schemes of study there. He carries out such a library with him as never, I presume, was known in Asia; for his plans of metaphysical and political reading, it is admirably selected. He has fortunately no desire to make himself particularly acquainted with either the language or the antiquities of Hindostan; but he has got permission from the Board of Controul and Directors to circulate, under their authority, statistical and political queries among all the servants of the Company in the different establishments. This may produce a little. In a few days the author of *Vindiciæ Gallicæ* is to receive the honour of knighthood!

You are indebted for this letter to a severe disappointment I met with this evening, in not getting into the House of Commons. A great display is

expected, on account chiefly of the nicety and various embarrassments under which the question must present itself to more than one of the parties.* They are now in the very heat and pride of the debate; twelve o'clock. After waiting all the morning, I got no farther than the door of the gallery. Every body here seems to be of one mind as to the justice of the war, in respect of the case (as we lawyers may call it) that this country can make out against Bonaparte; but the *policy* of war at the present juncture is a different question, of which people take various views. 1803. Æt. 25.

The old Opposition party held a meeting last night to discuss their plans; I learned a few particulars of it. Fox spoke with great moderation, expressed his anxiety for the preservation of peace, but acknowledged the difficulties of the conjuncture. He had to submit to the folly of some of his associates. Would you imagine that that great statesman Lord Suffolk embraced this seasonable occasion of giving Fox a formal lecture upon some improprieties of his former conduct; beginning with the coalition, and ending with the evidence at Maidstone. This was meant merely as friendly advice. Sheridan was so drunk, that the first time he spoke he was unintelligible; he afterwards became more articulate, and dwelt a good deal upon the danger of throwing the Doctor, by too severe an attack, into the arms of Pitt. This idea I find very prevalent among many of the friends and partisans of the old Opposition. But Fox's observation was more manly; that they were bound to expose those errors and weaknesses of which they were con-

* A motion of Lord Hawkesbury, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, for an Address to his Majesty, on his Message relative to the termination of the discussions with France. — Ed.

1803. Æt. 25. vinced, and were not entitled to practise an over-cautious and temporizing forbearance upon a calculation of any contingencies. Give my best respects to Cranstoun, and believe me, my dear Thomson,

Yours faithfully,

FRA. HORNER.

JOURNAL. "*May 28th.*—At Mr. Grant's*, Russell Square; met for the first time the Master of the Rolls† and Wilberforce; the former a silent but very good-natured man, the latter equally good-natured, and more talkative. Mackintosh was of the party, and was of course the great entertainer."

### LETTER XXXV. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, London, 11th June, 1803.

I received your letter on Thursday. I have had no business before the House of Lords; nor have I been engaged in any way that tends either to profit or improvement. You shall of course get an account from myself of every thing in that way which concerns me.

I decline Stewart's Life of Reid, for more reasons than one. I shall be much disappointed and really chagrined, if Jeffrey does not take it into his own hands. Whateley's book on Currency I should like to reserve for myself; and I will review it, if I think it worth while after Lord King's pamphlet.

I was so unlucky as not to hear the great debate. The first day of it, Petty came down early, that he

* Charles Grant, Esq., Director of the East India Company, father of the present Lord Glenelg.

† Sir William Grant.

might carry me through the house, but I just got up to the door of the gallery in time to see it completely full. I bore this misfortune with as much Christian or philosophic resignation as you may suppose me capable of. I likewise lost the adjourned part of the discussion, from not hearing early enough of the change in the hour of admission. By all the accounts I have collected, both Pitt and Fox made a very great display. Pitt's peroration was a complete half hour of his most powerful declamation, not lowered in its tone for a moment; not a particle of all this is preserved in the Report lately published, though said to be done by Canning. Fox's speech was quite of a different cast, and not at all in the tone which he usually adopts; no high notes, no impassioned bursts; but calm, subtle, argumentative pleasantry. He very seldom attempts to keep the house laughing; but in this speech, I understand, it was evidently his design throughout, and Mackintosh says he never heard so much wit. A good many of the points are repeated, none of which are in the newspapers, but I cannot pretend to give you them; I remember, however, the compliment he paid to Pitt's speech, that "if Demosthenes had been present, he must have admired, and might have envied." 1803. Æt. 25.

I do not believe there will be any change of ministers, unless some fatal blunder shall render it impossible for them to hold their seats longer. The king has two favourites—the war and the Doctor; but the Doctor has at present the preference, and even the war would be given up for him. Not that I believe there is any personal partiality for him, more than for his successors; but his manners must be delightful at Buckingham House. You would be surprised at Pitt's speech on Fox's motion about Russia; the

1803. Æt. 25. king had passed him in the park two days before without notice. About the same time Lady Fortescue, Lord Grenville's sister, was so coldly and rudely received at court, that none of the ladies of that house attended the birth-day. Such are the important trifles which, when correctly known, throw more light on the state of parties in this country, than all the harangues in Parliament.

Yours truly,
FRA. HORNER.

*Extract from a Letter to Mr. Murray, 6th July.*

"To satisfy you at once about what I fancy is your principal object of impatience against me at present, I shall, by the mail coach to-morrow, send off a parcel for the Review. It will contain only one article, but a long one. One or two more I shall send in time for publication. I hoped to have sent Lord King off this evening; but a knotty point has unexpectedly interrupted my progress, where I had taken for granted all was clear. You will easily discover this part of the article."*

LETTER XXXVI. TO JAMES REDDIE, ESQ., GLASGOW.

Dear Reddie, London, 21st July, 1803.

Your letter gave me the double satisfaction of hearing that your health was better, and that you had

* The following articles by Mr. Horner are in the fourth number of the Edinburgh Review, published this month: —
1. "Thoughts on the Restriction of Payments in Specie at the Banks of England and Ireland. By Lord King."
2 "Speech of Mr. Mackintosh on the Trial of John Peltier, for a Libel against Napoleon Bonaparte." — ED.

resumed your scheme of a work on International Law, which I always regretted that you had for a moment suspended. 1803. Æt. 25.

I have been with several foreign booksellers about the contents of the list you have sent me, and have left an order both with De Boffe and with Escher, who is now (I understand) the most active in procuring books from Germany. I am afraid, while the French army retain possession of the Elbe, that there will be considerable difficulty in getting any works from the Continent.

If you will allow me to offer an opinion on a point which you must have considered much more deeply yourself, I should venture to question the propriety of the change you have made in your general plan. You remember the distinction which Bentham makes between expository and critical treatises of law; they ought unquestionably to be kept as distinct from each other, as the provinces of the judge and the legislator. Now in the present circumstances of Europe, I fancy that an expository treatise of international law is not only more wished for than one of a critical and speculative nature, but is more likely to be useful, and to extend the reputation of its author. So many encroachments have recently been made, perhaps by both parties, on the ancient course and maxims of the law of nations, that the primary object of importance now is to re-inspire a deference to solemn precedents and established rules. I hardly know any thing more calculated to have this effect, than a learned and faithful exposition of the system. The execution of such a work will demand so much research, so much skill of arrangement, and such a firmness of temper, as may justly inflame all your ambition. You must forget (for that object) that you are a citizen of a

1803. Æt. 25. particular part of the European commonwealth, and consider yourself as a citizen of that commonwealth at large. In the present aspect of affairs, that is no ordinary effort; but it is absolutely necessary in your undertaking. In recommending you to adhere to your original plan of an expository treatise, I am supported by the authority of Mackintosh, to whom I mentioned your design generally, in order to obtain his opinion upon the point. I found him entirely coincide with my own ideas, both of the necessity of such a work at present, and of the vast field it presents for the acquisition of fame. Every lawyer, he told me, in the Cockpit and Commons, complains that they have no book whatever which they can have on the table for reference.

With respect to Gentz's designs, you need not be in the least alarmed. I consulted Mackintosh about this too, because he knows him intimately, and was much with him when Gentz was in England. His work will be entirely *polemical*, and defensive of the rights of Britain against the prejudices and doctrines of the Continent. This being the case, there can be no clashing of your plans; but his work, if published earlier, may be of use to you in one part of your work. I shall without any delay make a collection for you of all the tracts on the Armed Neutrality, that I can get hold of: if my books at Edinburgh were not packed up indiscriminately, I should have sent directions to give you my copies of them. I shall be glad to hear farther from you about this subject, to me, as you well know, most interesting, both for its own high importance, and from my sincere sympathy in your enjoyment and anticipation of reputation. I shall never forget an evening walk we had together in the summer of 1801, when you sketched to me the

outline of your intended arrangements. The details, however, I have not been able to carry so long in my head. If you can find leisure enough to communicate to me an idea of your plans, I will most willingly and most frankly tell you every thing that occurs to me. I must take another opportunity of informing you, in some measure, of the situation in which my own schemes of study are at present. 1803. Æt. 25.

Yours faithfully,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER XXXVII. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, London, 29th July, 1803.

I am grieved to hear of your indisposition; but it gives me a little satisfaction to know that you are aware of the great importance of care upon such occasions. I was beginning to blame you for not writing; and nothing has prevented me this week from writing to you, but military services. James Brougham and I joined the Bloomsbury Association; and for ten days past have been drilling most indefatigably; going from Northumberland Street up to the Foundling Hospital Ground twice every day. I have been at it three hours this morning, and my hand shakes so, that you see I cannot write. Your plan of weekly incitements to patriotism is good, provided you execute them well; coarsely, and plainly. Brougham, I think, will be most successful. Send me the first you print immediately, and all the rest; I may try my hand perhaps. Placards upon the walls have some effect: we have here, for want of original matter, the speeches in King John and Henry the Fifth; Rolla's speech, signed R. B. Sheridan, &c.;

1803. Æt. 25. Elizabeth's speech to her troops at Tilbury, they have not, though it is better than any; it is perhaps the purest piece of English eloquence existing, certainly the best war address.

I go to Garden Court this evening, and enter upon the proper life of a lawyer. What a plague of these warriors, that they break in upon all our schemes of study and slumber.

Let me hear from you very soon and very often, even though shortly; for I shall be very anxious to hear of your health while it is precarious.

Yours affectionately,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER XXXVIII. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, London, 6th August, 1803.

I like your Beacon well; it holds a strong, clear, and true light. I hope it will guide your countrymen into the right harbour. The old Scotsman is well personated; the local circumstances are well hit. Pray have you engaged Walter Scott in these patriotic labours? His border spirit of chivalry must be inflamed at present, and might produce something. I wish he would try a song. I joined Mackintosh in exhorting Campbell to court the Tyrtæan muse; as yet he has produced nothing: not that I looked upon the success of his efforts with certainty, being not quite in his line; but a miracle produced Hohinlinden, and this is now the age of miracles of every kind. You should reprint the different handbills that have had a great effect here; they are in general stupid and coarse, but it is the coarse souls which it is now most important to excite. The De-

claration of the merchants and bankers was written by Mackintosh. If you have any channel of influence over the ballad-singers of your city, you should set them all a-singing "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled." I understand the spirit of the people in London is in general almost as good as can be wished, and better than could have been expected. The police magistrates can form a tolerably good guess, from their spies in the alehouses. In the country, particularly along the coast, the spirit of the people is said to be very high. Indeed no other country of such extent ever exhibited so grand a spectacle, as the unanimity in which all political differences are at present lost. 1803. Æt. 25.

I am mightily amused with ———'s charge of plagiarism, which I scarcely indeed understand; he is a sensible neat man enough, and, in his own way, clever, but he has no measure for such understandings as Burke and Fox and Mackintosh; in the school of Burke, the last has certainly learned much of that practical sagacity and wisdom upon the politics of modern Europe, for which he is distinguished, and something too of the false taste in writing which may occasionally be objected to him; but to deny the defence of Peltier a merit and manner original, and quite distinct from that either of Fox or Burke, seems to me to proceed from a deficiency in those feelings and that comprehension which are requisite for such large subjects. The speech for Peltier has mannerism throughout, and one uniform cast of colouring; Mackintosh cannot then have stolen from both; for the manner of Burke differs as much from Fox's, as the style of Lucan or Milton from the style of Lucretius or Racine. You will perceive this charge of plagiarism has a little incensed me.

Tell Jeffrey I have taken to myself, for the Review,

1803. Æt. 25. Miss Williams's correspondence of Louis XVI. From what I see of it, I shall probably adore the unfortunate prince, and flagellate the conceited heartless woman.*

Yours ever,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER XXXIX. TO THOMAS THOMSON, ESQ.

My dear Thomson, London, 15th August, 1803.

It would be very dishonest in me not to acknowledge, that I did very frequently in my own mind reproach you for your long silence. But I take it for granted that you have formed resolutions of amendment; and I will say not a word more upon the subject.

I hope I am not mistaken in inferring from your letter, that you have set yourself doggedly to an analysis and criticism of Dumont's publication. It will cost you some trouble; but it is a noble subject. Dumont himself has been very anxious, I understand, to see it noticed by us: and indeed it should have made its appearance earlier. The work does not seem to have been much read, or to have excited much atten-

* The article appeared in the fifth number of the Edinburgh Review, published in October, 1803. The book is entitled —

"The Political and Confidential Correspondence of Louis the Sixteenth, with Observations on each Letter. By Helen Maria Williams." 3 vols. 8vo.

Professor Smyth has stated that this book was a forgery — "The men of letters in Paris are notorious for impositions of this nature. During the French Revolution, the "Letters of Louis XVI." were published in Paris. Helen Maria Williams, then on the spot, gave a considerable sum for the manuscript, and translated it; she had no doubt of the authenticity of the work: the Edinburgh Review pronounced in favour of it, in an article written by so considerable a reasoner as Francis Horner: it was quoted in one of the chambers, after the Restoration, as genuine. After all, the whole turned out to be a forgery; and two impudent men came forward, and avowed that they had thought it a fair literary enterprise one morning after breakfast." (*Lectures on the French Revolution*, vol. iii. p. 277. published in 1840.) — ED.

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tion, even in that small class of persons to whom such attempts are interesting. Bentham's name is repulsive. I never got through more than a half of the three volumes, and that not in a manner to have fixed much in my memory, or to qualify me for an opinion. The truth is, I found that I did not assimilate much matter; I made very little chyle of it, and I lost appetite for the food. But I have always meant to attack it again; for though I am satisfied the system is quite devoid of large views and comprehensive principles, there are possibly minute details both ingeniously contrived and admitting of practical applications. It is a curious fact, and to me almost unaccountable, that more copies of Dumont's book have been sold in Spain than either in England or France.

There has been nothing new very lately in the line of political economy, though Brougham's work* and Malthus's† are a great deal for one year. An indirect application was made to me, to furnish a set of notes for a new edition of Smith's "Wealth of Nations;" this of course I declined, because I have other things to attend to: even if I had been prepared for such an undertaking, which I certainly am not yet, I should be reluctant to expose Smith's errors before his work has operated its full effect. We owe much at present to the superstitious worship of Smith's name; and we must not impair that feeling, till the victory is more complete. There are few practical errors in the "Wealth of Nations," at least of any great consequence; and, until we can give a correct and precise theory of the nature and origin of wealth, his popular and plausible and loose hypothesis is as good for the vulgar as any other.

* On Colonial Policy.

† Essay on the Principle of Population, in one volume, quarto; "a new edition, very much enlarged."—Ed.

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I have some hopes of completing my set of the *Economiste* books, in consequence of an application by Mackintosh to Morellet at Paris. If I procure duplicates of any, I will take care of you. Morellet knows more of the matter than any other person living; as he has been a labourer in that line, and of the first class, for near fifty years. I suppose you heard of the First Consul having nominated him to the *Conseil du Commerce;* but he complains sadly of the ignorance that is triumphant; all his representations and remonstrances are quite ineffectual. He has preserved his name unsullied through the revolution, and a character for independence; the same can hardly be said of any other literary man at Paris, though they have, upon the whole, behaved less atrociously and servilely than the men of science. Morellet has likewise preserved his library, which is very rich and curious in our way; when it is dispersed, I hope we shall catch some fragments.

The approaching invasion, and the circumstances of the country, have driven every other topic from conversation; questions are mooted, and possibilities supposed, that make one shudder for the fate of the world. But my habit is confidence; I have not been long enough away from Stewart, to have yet unlearned his optimism. But these intervals of ambiguity, and these suspensions of general laws, are dreadful while they last.

Yours sincerely,

FRA. HORNER.

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LETTER XL. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ. ÆT. 26.

My dear Murray, London, 17th August, 1803.

I have looked for some more Scotch Beacons with impatience; this invasion is a subject which I am unwilling to forget for a single hour. Every thing depends upon the spirit of the country; and now that parliament is up, the country is in a great measure left to itself.

The appearances are very gloomy and troubled all round us, but just where we stand, the spot is bright. You used to quiz me a little for my sanguine hopes about further progress; but I assure you, I am forced to summon all my philosophy to keep these hopes alive. It is probable, I endeavour to persuade myself, that the people of England are about to gain, for civilisation and true democracy, a very splendid triumph over military despotism; but it is terrible to think, that we can only call this at the best a probability. I have been lately fortifying myself by some favourite historical precedents—the invasion of Greece by Persia, Holland by Louis XIV., and England by Philip. What a mortifying contrast the behaviour of Elizabeth forces us to make with some characters of the present age; so much spirit, caution, and generous confidence, contrasted with bigotry, mean jealousy, and a selfish stupid coldness towards the people. Remember what Hume tells us of the conduct of Elizabeth to the Catholics, who in her time were really dangerous; now it is a certain fact, that the few of the present peers and gentry of England, that adhere to that persuasion, have been treated with indignity and distrust.* They held a meeting for an address to the king, adding to the usual forms of

1803. Æt. 26. loyalty an expression of regret that, by the laws of the land, they could not contribute their personal services: Lords Petre, Arundel, and Kenmare (of Ireland), were the leading names. From delicacy alone, a draught of their address was previously communicated to one of the Secretaries of State, and it was returned with the passage I have alluded to expunged. The consequence was, that no address was presented. This was before the rebellion broke out in Ireland. Since that event, a plan has been suggested by the Prince, that he should go to that country with Moira, Lord Hutchinson, and Sheridan; in such a disease, even desperate remedies and quack medicines ought to be tried, and I really believe that the humbug popularity of Sheridan and Moira might have a healing effect, especially if assisted by the more substantial measure of emancipation, which hazards nothing against us, gives the Irish almost all they ask, and nothing more than in justice they ought to have had long ago. The Doctor, or some other of his compeers, said of this scheme with great decency, that it was as much as their places were worth to hint at it. You must have noticed the address from the county of York, as by far the best thing that has appeared upon this great occasion; it is a single sentence, but one of admirable power and composition. I hear it was written by Mr. Fawkes, a gentleman of property, who has been mentioned as likely to represent the county. For the Scotch Beacon, I wish you would read the history of Judas Maccabeus in the Apocrypha; it will furnish you with some apt and glowing quotations. The feelings of local patriotism and attachment to old laws and national independence are ardently and eloquently expressed. I do not know a finer piece of dramatic narrative than the second

chapter. You may laugh at those oddities in human character, which make the same quotations of Scripture appropriate now, that fired and maddened the poor persecuted Covenanters. 1803. Æt. 26.

Believe me truly yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER XLI. FROM SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

Dear Horner, Tenby, South Wales, 26th August, 1803.

We shall both be very happy to hear that you persevere in your intention of visiting South Wales. We shall be here for nearly four weeks, and I need hardly say how much you would add to our enjoyment of the sea and rocks here: they are very beautiful, and the road from Gloucestershire through Monmouthshire, Brecknockshire, and Caermarthenshire, is as beautiful as any equal extent of country in the world.

Are the Sydney Smiths come to town? I waited two days till near eleven, for you and Mr. Playfair to breakfast. If he has a separate copy of his paper on Indian astronomy, I should be very desirous of bringing it with me. Your Edinburgh Transactions are too large, and not interesting enough. I should be very curious to know whether he thinks Bentley's objections to the antiquity of the Indian calculations conclusive: they are in the sixth volume of the Asiatic Researches. I own I lean against great antiquity, as against all marvellous things. It is so naturally connected with national vanity, and with the general proneness to exaggerate, that I should require stronger evidence *for* than *against* it.

Miss Williams's observations (or rather Stone's, for

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I am persuaded they are his) on Louis XVI.'s letters are, to be sure, stupid and malignant to the last degree. In talking either of Berthier or Foulon (I forget which), *she* or rather *he* says that the charge of monopolising provisions, with a view to starve Paris, *has never been disproved.* This sort of negative observation, after a man has been murdered, savours rather strongly of revolutionary law. But what strikes me most is the admirable consistency of her belief in forestalling, with a reverence for Turgot, whom, it is very obvious, she admires only for his faults. I do not believe in the authenticity of *all* the letters; there is no evidence produced of it, and some of them have a sententious and ostentatious cast, very unlike the simplicity of the poor king's mind and style. They are, however, I believe a very fair picture of his sentiments, and they represent perfectly the opinion generally entertained of him in France. She deserves a very severe castigation for dulness and malevolence. Depend upon it that liberal principles will never again be popular, till we shake off all those who have brought disgrace upon them.

But I catch myself prosing, and shall therefore conclude, with assuring you that

I am ever truly yours,

J. Mackintosh.

### Letter XLII. TO L. HORNER, ESQ.

My dear Leonard, Temple, 5th November, 1803.

By a letter from my father this morning, I have had the satisfaction to be assured that my mother's health is restored. * * *

Tell my father, he is quite right about Atterbury's Sermon; I believe I have borrowed two phrases out of it, though I have not been honest enough to mark more than *one* of them in Italics. I ought, in this theft, to plead in mitigation of punishment, the merits of my memory; for I have not opened Atterbury's Sermons these many years, and have not read that on the Martyrdom of Charles, since the first or second year I was at college. 1803. Æt. 26.

I am glad to find you have been reading Adam Smith; it is quite true, as you remark, that upon the subject of money he is not quite clear; the true reason of which is, that in some points he is not quite right, as you will be satisfied after you have studied a little farther. What I say now applies entirely to the fifth chapter, which I would not have you puzzle yourself with too much; it is sufficient for your present purpose, that you take from it the general idea of what distinguishes the *money-price* of commodities from their *real* price, or their price in other goods. This will fully enable you to understand all his subsequent reasonings with regard to prices, at least all such of them as are accurate and quite free from error; for you are not to take for granted all that is given you in this book, more than you ought to do in any other; and it should be your rule in reading, upon all occasions and all subjects, to examine the truth of every argument by the force of your own understanding. There is less chance, however, of being led into false opinions by the "Wealth of Nations," than by almost any other book on that kind of philosophy.

With respect to the time you are to divide between political economy and chemistry, you must, of course, judge for yourself. To a certain degree, I believe it

1803. Æt. 26. is most beneficial in study to indulge one's taste and predilections, particularly if they are strong; but in this, to be sure, some discretion too is necessary. I shall only say, that you will have *less* opportunity of being taught the elements of political economy *here**, than of prosecuting your knowledge of chemistry, which I presume by this time is a good deal more than elementary. There are in London more than a dozen courses of lectures on chemistry, though none certainly so valuable as those at Edinburgh; but there are no lectures whatever on political science. I have no purpose in mentioning all this, but to make you fully aware of the advantages of your present situation; if you were to neglect them, which I am sure you will not, you might feel a regret when it would be unavailing.

With respect to chemistry in general, I would advise you, from my own experience, not to throw away many hours upon manual and operative experiments; because your plans of life will not admit of your ever becoming a perfect, or even a tolerable, workman. Indeed your views should be a good deal higher than that; you have surely no ambition to discover a new metal or earth. If you had, you have no chance of success, unless you chain yourself for life to a furnace. Do not imagine that I am disposed to damp your ardour for chemical studies; on the contrary, my design is to promote it, by urging you to choose the most important and most difficult parts of the science. Do not quit it, till you have mastered all the general knowledge, that has hitherto been ascertained, of the chemical phenomena of nature; and have fixed in your mind such a store of facts,

* His father had by this time determined to remove his residence from Edinburgh to London. — Ed.

and principles, and *reasonings*, as will enable you, after you turn your labours to other subjects, to follow the future discoveries and improvements that may be made. Only remember, that an evening, for your purposes, may be far more profitably employed in labouring to comprehend a general theory or exposition of great natural phenomena, or to detect the fallacies of an inaccurate hypothesis, than in watching the manipulation of a process which you perfectly understand, but which you cannot qualify yourself perfectly to execute. You have to render yourself a man of liberal information and of a cultivated understanding, not a dexterous apothecary. I often reflect, with pain and regret, that the hours I have wasted in distilling sulphuric acid for future experiments that never were attempted, might have put me in full and steady possession of the doctrine of latent heat, the theory of affinities, that of oxygenation in its various branches, &c. &c.

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Write to me soon, and all about your studies, &c. without minding the rotation of other letters from York Place.

Affectionately yours,

Fra. Horner.

### Letter XLIII. TO JAMES REDDIE, ESQ.

My dear Reddie, Temple, 14th November, 1803.

I am sincerely concerned to hear that your health is still so delicate, as not to permit you to undertake the fatigues of the Winter Session. In every other respect your present situation is to be envied; a retirement occupied in the pursuits of learning, and the prospect of a reputation to be earned by those pursuits, are a pleasant exchange

1803. Æt. 26. indeed for professional toils and technical studies. I interest myself very much in the progress of your undertaking; such feeble means of assistance as are in my power, I shall exert with cheerfulness, and think myself highly flattered by your requiring them of me. When I received your last letter but one, Mackintosh was in the country; since his return, I have had a pretty full conversation with him upon your business, and told him expressly the nature of the work in which you are engaged.

I believe that I have already told you that such a book is an acknowledged *desideratum*; the execution of it, he thinks, will be attended with no common difficulties, but (these being conquered) the success of it would be certain and great. That success, he says, will turn upon the adaptation of the book to the use of practisers in the courts; and their habits, though some of them may be prejudices, must be consulted and indulged in the form and mode of composition. I have already found, I assure you, even in ordinary literary conversation, the necessity of unlearning something of the manners which one imbibes in the metaphysical climate of Edinburgh: such as the inclination to theorize, and to present general principles or rules in a scholastic dress. With respect to the practical substance of international law, Mackintosh has more than once confessed to me, that he discovered he knew almost nothing of it when he first went into the Cockpit, though he had previously studied it with some attention, and had lectured on it in Lincoln's Inn Hall.

Mackintosh speaks very highly of the general views given by Leibnitz in the preface, or *Monitum*, to his *Codex Juris Gentium Diplomaticus*. You will find this in the fourth volume of Dutens' edition, p. 285.

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These remarks principally relate, I believe, to the nature and authority of usage; and it is no doubt the greatest nicety in your whole undertaking to ascertain the just description and extent of that vague and fluctuating source of rules.

From your last letter, I suspect you may be too anxious to draw the precise line, which marks off your peculiar subjects from the other provinces and departments of jurisprudence. Metaphysically speaking, there must doubtless be such a line and boundary, if our present language had power to describe it: but it is hardly to be expected, that in the practical administration of any branch of law, such exactness should have been scrupulously observed. We may incur a real inexactness, by attempting to reach an abstract ideal accuracy, beyond and above the clumsy conveniences of practice. When you send me the sketch of your plan, which I am very anxious to see, tell me whether I may show it to Mackintosh, so as to place him more completely in possession of the general nature of your design.

Farewell, my dear Reddie; believe me faithfully and affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

JOURNAL. "*January 14th.*—I ought to be ashamed of myself for having omitted to keep some sort of diary, during the early part of this winter; when I have been tasting for the first time the sweets of London society, and commencing that course of instruction, under other men's minds, the use and direction of which will determine the cast of my future character; for my character I must still look upon as of future formation. I have no leisure now to recall any part of the time I have passed; my society has been

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chiefly at Mackintosh's house, and among the men whom he brings together.*

"This morning spent with Sharp† has forced me to attempt again a journal. He is a very extraordinary man; I have seen so much of him lately, that I determine every day to see more of him, as much as I possibly can. His great subject is criticism, upon which he always appears to me original and profound; what I have not frequently observed in combination, he is both subtle and feeling. Next to literature, the powers of his understanding, at once ingenious and plain, show themselves in the judgment of characters; he has seen much of the great men of the last generation, and he appears to have seen them well. In this particular, his conversation is highly interesting; from his talent of painting by incidents and minute ordinary features, he almost carries you back to the society of those great personages, and makes you live for a moment in their presence. He has paid much attention to metaphysics also, and appears to me to praise the best books, with the exception of Hartley, whom both he and Mackintosh admire extremely, though in Scotland we are prohibited from reading him by the contempt with which he is spoken of. I must read him. But I shall take many other opportunities of writing about Sharp. We ran over all the title-pages in his room. I have brought away one or two books to read by his advice, particularly *Fleury, Du Choix et de la Conduite des Etudes.* He showed me a letter of Pliny, lib. ix. cap. 10., which, compared with two passages in the *Dialogus de Oratoribus*, [in both of which the phrase '*nemora et lucos*' occurs], strikes him as

* See Memoirs of Sir J. Mackintosh, vol. i. p. 190. — Ed.
† Richard Sharp, Esq., afterwards M. P.

a proof that that Dialogue was really written by Tacitus. He observed of Butler's analogy, that the great merit of that writer lies in proportioning his language to the degree of his assent, and in communicating that degree perspicuously to his reader: I am too little acquainted with the manner of Butler to feel this to be just, but I feel the remark, taken generally, to be a most important one, and one to be remembered for ever in the accomplishment of my great objects. He spoke of Henderson of Oxford; that though he had much quackery before ignorant people to astonish them with his eccentricities of erudition, which became so much a habit that he was generally quackish in the selection of his subjects, the manner was full of ability; and that he had a very powerful understanding. The only things ever printed by Henderson were two statements, of the arguments for and against necessity, and of the arguments for and against Berkleianism; Henderson was a Berkleian and a Necessarian. Sharp showed me a curious document about Junius; the first collection he made of his letters, containing some of a previous date, as far back as August 1768, signed *Lucius;* the same manner evidently, not yet perfectly formed and rounded. There are said to be two other letters by the same hand, signed *Domitian.* 1804. Æt. 26.

"*January* 18*th.*—The history of the volunteers, during the last summer, followed out through that dissolution which already appears to have begun, is a most important experiment upon the subject of national defence, considered with respect to the peculiar circumstances of so complicated a form of society as that in which we live. The opinion of Pitt, with respect to the volunteer system, appears a great blunder for so eminent a statesman. Is it improbable,

1804. Æt. 26. that he may persist in the same conduct, though convinced of his error, on account of the immense and powerful engine of present popularity, which the volunteer system puts in his hands?

"The great error of Fox, in the late years of opposition, appears to have consisted in that favourable expectation of the issue of the French Revolution, which was natural to young and to speculative thinkers, but hardly to be permitted in a practised statesman. He felt too much, and reflected too little; perhaps he did not take sufficient pains to inquire into facts. He gave an indolent indulgence to his benevolent and great feelings. An error of an inferior appearance, but of fatal influence upon the Opposition party, was the countenance given to the Jacobin party in England by Mr. Fox. He was misled in this by some people about him; and by the persuasion, no doubt, that that powerful party might easily be restrained from excess, and in the mean time give effectual aid to the prevalence of popular sentiments. Fox was led, in this business, even by such an unworthy agent as Dennis O'Brien; who must have been the original, as Mackintosh remarked to me, of Burke's picture of the *go-between*, in the 'Appeal from the Old to the New Whigs.'

"*Political Anecdote.*—Lord Mornington, now Marquis Wellesley, paid a visit to his friend Mr. Addington, in Berkshire, about the time he was appointed Governor General of India. In a conversation on the subject, he was enumerating some of the disadvantages and objections to the situation. 'Lord Cornwallis,' he said, 'has done every thing; *has left nothing for me to do.*' Mr. Addington, now minister, told this last Saturday to Sir James Mackintosh, from whom I have it. I forgot to ask whether, in stating this curious and

valuable anecdote, the minister appeared conscious of the inference that it suggests with regard to Wellesley's character, or the explanation it affords, from that character, of the measures of his administration. It was mentioned, however, in a conversation in which Addington was gently, and after his manner, blaming the wars, &c. of the Governor General.

"*January* 22*d.*—At Sydney Smith's: the happiest day I remember to have ever spent; Mackintosh, Whishaw, Sharp, Rogers, and three interesting women of unlike characters and manners. I was startled to hear Sharp say that the critical writings of Marmontel were unreadable; I have always considered them almost evangelically orthodox.

"*January* 25*th.* — At Rogers's; — Mackintosh, Sharp, Sydney Smith, Wilkins, &c. Somewhat a melancholy evening, for it was the last Mackintosh is to spend in London. Wilkins was a load upon the company; for with that cast of gloom, and fond to fix our eyes to the last moment on the light that was sinking below our horizon, and is now sunk, one was not disposed to think of grammatical antiquities. It is something, however, to have seen the first Englishman who read Sanscrit; a plain, hard-headed man, enthusiastic and liberal in his own walk of literature, but with no original thoughts or feelings out of it.

"*February* 2*d.*—Spent the whole afternoon with Sharp; I trust beneficially, I am sure most delightfully. He spoke very actively, and sometimes with ardour. I begin to learn the art of listening; a difficult art. He talked to me a great deal about the commerce of London, on which he must be extensively informed; I can judge for myself, that he spoke with precision on some interesting views of it. I

1804. Æt. 26. have elsewhere noted such facts as I have been able to remember. We ended of course upon criticism, minute criticism of English composition. Though I boast of beginning to learn the art of listening, I have not acquired the least talent for putting questions; still more difficult."

LETTER XLIV. TO WILLIAM ERSKINE, ESQ., PORTSMOUTH.

Dear Erskine, London, 4th February, 1804.

I am vexed that you should have suffered so much delay in receiving your letters. I am afraid Sir James may not have received all that has been sent; the Edinburgh Review last Monday, and the London Reviews on Thursday.

Yesterday I flattered myself with the idea of seeing you once more, for Mr. Sharp and I had settled it so. But these cruel tempests have brought back some of his West Indian ships to Plymouth, and he cannot leave London in the midst of the business which this occasions.

Give my respects to Sir James and Lady Mackintosh, when you see them. I never pretended to express to either of them my sense of the great kindness they have shown me since I came to London, because I could not express it adequately; I shall ever feel it with gratitude, if I am good for any thing. To Mackintosh, indeed, my obligations are of a far higher order than those even of the kindest hospitality; he has been an intellectual master to me, and has enlarged my prospects into the wide regions of moral speculation, more than any other tutor I have ever had in the art of thinking; I cannot even except Dugald Stewart, to whom I once thought I owed

more than I could ever receive from another. Had Mackintosh remained in England, I should have possessed ten years hence, powers and views which are now beyond my reach. I never left his conversation, but I felt a mixed consciousness, as it were, of inferiority and capability; and I have now and then flattered myself with this feeling, as if it promised that I might make something of myself. I cannot think of all this, without being melancholy; "ostendent tantum fata, neque ultra." Farewell, my dear Erskine, and believe me faithfully and affectionately yours,

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FRA. HORNER.

LETTER XLV. FROM LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.

Dear Horner, Torquay, 11th April, 1804.

I have been living here alone for some weeks, and a great part of what little leisure I have has been employed in studies, the pleasing toil of which you once shared with me. This has often led my thoughts towards you, and those thoughts have at length ripened into a letter.

I long very much to see you, and to renew old subjects, and to profit by the information you have acquired since we parted. It will be amusing to me to trace what changes have been produced in your opinions by the society of London. You will not think I say this with any air of triumph, for you cannot suppose that I wish you to have taken up old-fashioned English prejudices in the room of the philosophy of the North; but it may be supposed that there are national peculiarities in the sentiments and literary taste of the most enlightened minds in

1804. Æt. 26. this country, and I conceive that some of them, with whom you have been conversant, may have imparted a little of these peculiarities to you. I am glad you saw all you could of Mackintosh, who is to me a *magnus Apollo* above all the men with whom I am acquainted. His talents are of the highest kind, and of that kind perhaps the first in degree. Stewart I believe to be as bright a sun, and his lustre is certainly more benignant, but Stewart veils himself in an eclipse, and Mackintosh has dazzled me most. I expect to gain much from your conversations with Mackintosh, and I shall have the advantage of having the ideas which you derived from him conveyed to me in an arrangement and in language, to which I have been accustomed. See how you are threatened with my *chain pump*.

Since the middle of August last I have not left Devonshire. My time has been almost wholly occupied with the business of my regiment, and chiefly in drudgery with pen and ink. Fortunately I had been prepared for this by patient application to some things in science for which I had no relish. This volunteer business has had, however, the good effect of restoring (and I flatter myself completely restoring) my love of philosophical pursuits and of study, which, as I have before told you, had been wretchedly impaired by my over-strained exertions at Edinburgh. In January I resumed the study of the *Prærogativa Instantiarum*, with no very serious hopes of prosecuting it amidst my present engagements. But the attempt has succeeded beyond my expectations; for, though often interrupted, I have pursued the work ever since, and am growing every day more attached to it. When I take up the little vellum-coated companion you gave me, it is with feelings of self-

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indulgence; and speculation is now quite a refreshment from the harass of business. My progress in this study has of course been exceedingly slow: I dwell a fortnight sometimes upon one kind of instantiæ. But I care not if this small part of Bacon's work employs me two years, for I find it furnish hints for speculations which branch off into all parts of the great subject; and as I write perseveringly, I may in this desultory manner collect a store of useful materials. Our practice of illustrating by examples, from the more recent investigations of science, I continue very assiduously. Having been led to think lately upon the principles of classification, and finding myself deficient in illustrations, I have returned to my once favourite botany, for the sake of examining the various characters for classification which the vegetable kingdom affords, and considering the advantages of those chosen by Linnæus. My previous knowledge of the details is of course very useful to me.

The environs of this place form one of the most beautiful pieces of sea-coast I know. You have this noble bay (itself finely indented) closed in on this side by a country that has all the varied charms of wildness and fertility, gray rocks and verdure, and trees almost upon the beach. Spring is now beginning to dress the scene in her gayest colours. If I am here in summer, you must come and see me. Remember me to Sydney Smith, and Elmsley*, and Whishaw; to whom I have been long in debt for two very entertaining letters.

Yours ever,

WEBB SEYMOUR.

* The Rev. Peter Elmsley, elected in 1823 Principal of St. Alban Hall, Oxford.

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LETTER XLVI. TO HIS FATHER.

My dear Sir, London, 24th April, 1804.

You will not get yesterday's newspaper, in consequence of my going down to Westminster before it arrived. I was at the door of the House by half past eight; so that we had a pretty good seat of it, till three next morning. But we were fully rewarded.* I have not read the report in the Morning Chronicle; but if it is no better than they have been of late, you will receive but a feeble impression of the debate. Fox's opening speech was not eloquent; on the contrary, slovenly as to manner, and languid; probably from an express intention to restrain himself on personal topics, that he might not anticipate Pitt in this respect; he did not allude to ministers, but confined himself to the inadequacy of the present arrangements for national defence, and the means of improving them into a permanent system by a better plan of recruiting, and by regulations for military exercises among the peasantry. All the substance of his speech was excellent. Pitt gave us both substance and manner, as a debater of the highest powers; most explicit in his declaration against ministers, which he delivered, however, as if at last after much consideration and reluctance; but he enforced it with a good deal of grave vehement declamation in his way, and some touches of that bitter freezing sarcasm, which every body agrees is his most original talent, and appears indeed most natural to him. His speech was very argumentative and full of details; through-

* The debate was on a motion of Mr. Fox:—"That it be referred to a Committee of the whole House to revise the several Bills for *The Defence of the Country*, and to consider of such further measures as may be necessary to make that defence more complete and permanent."—ED.

out, the impression he left was, and he disguised very successfully his anxiety to make this impression, that every measure government had adopted for the national defence originated from his suggestion, which they had marred, however, by adopting them imperfectly, and carrying them still worse into execution. The speeches of ministers were confined, till the Attorney-General* rose, to the defence of the different parts of their military measures that had been attacked; Percival took a much more judicious view of the debate, and treated the motion as if it had been in terms for the dismissal of ministers. This was the true mode of treating it, if he could have executed his idea with skill; but his want of talent drove him to violence and extreme personality, so as to betray the fury and despair of his friends, or rather their convulsions in death. His personal abuse of Fox and Windham was vulgar and gross in the extreme. But we in the gallery were much indebted to him, for it produced a masterly speech from each in their very different styles. Windham repelled the personality, chiefly by the contrast of his own manner; with great fire, but perfect temper, a very polite contempt, and exquisite wit; he spoke not more than ten minutes, but he refreshed one's mind from all the bad feelings that Percival had given us. Fox treated him after a different regimen; condemning, with much vehemence and indignation, the faction and ribaldry which he had introduced into the debate; and defending his own political connections and conduct with all the manliness and simplicity of his best manner. It is very likely that, so soon after the great entertainment I have had, I may be talking of it in a way that you will suppose exaggerated; but if it is so, you will

* The Hon. Spencer Percival.

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know how to make allowances. One feature of the debate I must not forget; the fulsome adulation paid by Tierney, and the Attorney-General to Pitt; the latter of whom said, that no event would be more agreeable to the country than his return to power—a very strange expression to use in such circumstances. After such a division as that of last night, nobody conceives the Doctor can any longer remain at the head.

Love to my mother and sisters.

I am ever faithfully yours,

FRA. HORNER.

JOURNAL. "*May 16th.*—This day I have made my first appearance at the bar of the House of Lords; and have committed what Hume calls the most presumptuous of all attempts—to speak before the Chancellor with less than a month's study of the laws.* For I can scarcely say that I have ever given a month's study to Scotch law, or to any law. I have probably, therefore, spoken to the same effect that Hume describes, that of labouring to make myself

* "The greatest genius, and greatest orator, who should pretend to plead before the *Chancellor*, after a month's study of the laws, would only labour to make himself ridiculous." (Essay xvi. "*Of Eloquence*," quarto edition, Edinburgh, 1758.) He was led to make this remark, by what he had said before—"The great statesmen and generals among the Romans were all lawyers; and CICERO, to show the facility of acquiring this science, declares, that in the midst of all his occupations he would undertake, in a few days, to make himself a complete civilian. Now, where a pleader addresses himself to the equity of his judges, he has much more room to display his eloquence, than where he must draw his arguments from strict laws, statutes, and precedents. In the former case, many circumstances must be taken in, many personal considerations regarded; and even favour and inclination, which it belongs to the orator, by his art and eloquence, to conciliate, may be disguised under the appearance of equity. But, how shall a modern lawyer have leisure to quit his toilsome occupations, in order to gather the flowers of Parnassus? Or what opportunity shall he have of displaying them, amidst the rigid and subtle arguments, objections, and replies, which he is obliged to make use of?"—ED.

ridiculous. I know full well that I must at least have been ridiculous from my symptoms of trepidation and embarrassment. Speaking for the first time in any place would make me nervous; but before so great an assembly, (great from association and previous impression), in a large hall, those you address at a great distance from you, with a vacant gap between, is enough to chill all fancy and all memory. If I had not used the precaution of full notes, which must become unnecessary as soon as I can render it so, I should have utterly lost my train of argument. I scarcely could finish a sentence, and could find no variety of language to express distinct ideas. This, I know, partly resulted from having notes, and from not having courage to trust myself to invention extempore; but my tongue in truth clove to the roof of my mouth." 1804. Æt. 26.

LETTER XLVII. TO JOHN A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, The Temple, 8th June, 1804.

I have just received your kind inquiries, and am much pleased to have at length a letter from you.

Tell Jeffrey not to be so much alarmed; and that I wish to keep Stevens's new pamphlet called "Opportunity" for a review. Brougham and I have been discussing the subject a little; and I feel myself more inclined to agree with the author than with Brougham upon the subject. I wish, besides, to break a lance in this chivalrous cause, the slave trade, before it be quite forgotten, and to pronounce a panegyric on Wilberforce and Co., if they shall prove victorious, or to animate them to farther per-

1804. Æt. 26. severance if they suffer another defeat. So that you may suspect me of a desire to be converted, if you please, and to labour, as Wilberforce said of Brougham, when he introduced him to one of the brethren, "in the same vineyard."

Ever faithfully yours,
FRA. HORNER.

JOURNAL. "*June 15th.*—This afternoon I had a meeting, by appointment, with Mr. Elphinstone, the chairman, and Mr. Charles Grant, the deputy-chairman, of the East India Company. They had made a previous application to me, through Mr. Adam, to know if I would undertake an exposition of the views now entertained in Leadenhall Street, with respect to the extension of their Eastern dominions, and an examination of the Governor-general's conduct in the late or present war against the Marattas. As I signified my assent to the proposal, this meeting was for the purpose of entering a little into particulars, and settling the scheme. Mr. Grant was the spokesman, and though I have long been aware of his worth and information, I had now occasion to admire both the extent of his knowledge in Indian politics, and the purity, sensibility and enlargement of his political views. This is an honourable opportunity for me, and, if I make the most of it, may prove a crisis in my progress. It is a great subject on many accounts, and I shall bring the discussion before the whole audience of England. The investigations it involves will lead me, I expect, to a survey of the whole system of our Oriental policy and projects; and in advocating a cause which is congenial to my own principles and feelings, I shall have to illustrate the high rules of political virtue, to assert the rights of remote nations of men,

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and to prescribe maxims to the government of England for the preservation and improvement of her empire in Asia.*

"*June 30th.*—I have received from Lord Fitzwilliam, whom I never saw, an invitation to dine with him; and I am given to understand, it is a political party dinner. After some deliberation, and consulting with Adam, Ward †, and Whishaw, I have accepted it. Almost from my first entrance upon the study of law, I considered politics as an ultimate object and a concurrent occupation. Political adventure is a game which I am disqualified from playing by many circumstances of my character; and which I am resolved to decline. But some share in public business, acquired by reputation, and supported on an independent footing, is a fair object, and almost the only reward that stimulates me to the law. Without belonging to a party, there can be no efficient participation in public affairs. If an honourable man sees no formed party, among the factions of the state, by whom his general ideas of policy are maintained, he will shrink from them all, and attempt only individual efforts to explain and enforce his views. But in the general maxims and principles of Mr. Fox's party, both with regard to the doctrine of the constitution, to foreign policy, and to the modes of internal legislation, I recognise those to which I have been led by the results of my own reflection, and by the tenor of my philosophic education. And I am ambitious to co-operate with that party, in labouring to realise those enlightened principles in the government of our own country; however I lament

* I have not found in any of Mr. Horner's papers or letters any evidence of this "exposition" having been written; and a Director of the East India Company, who was kind enough to make the search at my request, did not discover any such document among the Archives of the India House.—Ed.

† The Hon. John W. Ward, afterwards Earl Dudley.

1804. Æt. 26. some violences and mistakes in the conduct of Opposition on particular occasions, and however much I suspect the characters of some who have at times been very near Mr. Fox's person. All my feelings carry me towards that party; and all my principles confirm the predilection. Into that party, therefore, I resolutely enlist myself; with very feeble hopes of its ever being for any long period triumphant in power. There is a low prudence, in rearing the fabric of one's fortunes, which fixes the ambition (if it may be called by so proud a name) on the actual possession of places and emolument; and there are some living instances which prove this to be quite a sure game, provided there are never any compunctious visitings of principle or personal regard. There is a more virtuous discretion, which limits a man's schemes of exertion to his professional sphere, and to the honest accumulation of large profits and small praises, such as the English bar seems almost infallibly to bestow on diligent abilities. But there is a more elevated prudence, which does not stop at affluence in its prospect, but ventures to include the chances of lasting service to mankind, and of a good name impressed upon the history of the times. I could not have desired a more respectable channel of introduction to the meetings of the party, than that of Lord Fitzwilliam's house; for though I have never been made known to that nobleman, I am not ostensibly brought to his house by any other person. I have some reason to believe that Lord Lauderdale may have suggested my name; but I am pleased that I do not enter under his wing, as his is one of those characters in which I have not yet entire confidence."

"*July* 1*st*. — I have been at Lord Fitzwilliam's; the party, like all large ones, unsatisfactory. I had the pleasure, however, of seeing, and being intro-

duced to, Windham and Sheridan. I heard Windham talk no more than to enchant me with his manner; Sheridan, I had an opportunity of seeing and hearing more at length, and in an appropriate manner, for he went afterwards with the younger men of the company to a tavern, where we sat till three o'clock in the morning. His serious conversation, about the defence bill and some other matters, was very tame; but his satire and pleasantry full of fire and vigour. He seems to me rather too attentive to strangers, though his manners are certainly very polished; but this courteous notice of one looks as if it had a purpose, though it may not. 1804. Æt. 26.

"The intention, I find, of bringing people together at Lord Fitzwilliam's, was that some association might be formed, for writing pamphlets, squibs, epigrams, &c. &c. against the administration. So that this is the end of the scheme which was communicated to me, in a message from Lord R. Spencer, with a request that I would belong to the club. I saw no persons brought together, who are likely to write together, except those whose writings would be worth less than nothing; such must I esteem ——, ——, ——, &c., not to name others who ought to have no *acknowledged* place in such society. This literary scheme, of commanding the press, will end in a few paltry skirmishes, and some epigrams, by Jekyll*, Fitzpatrick, and Lord John Townshend. At any rate, it is not my destiny to write in newspapers; nor is it likely, that the proposal will ever be made to me. I shall perhaps look out for some opportunities, of my own accord, for writing constitutional tracts, such as those opportunities which my Lord Somers, in his earlier days, thought no improper temptations from the general career which he pursued."

* *Note by Mr. Horner, dated* 1806.—"By Jekyll only, as it turned out."

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LETTER XLVIII. FROM FRANCIS JEFFREY, ESQ.

Dear Horner, Edinburgh, 5th August, 1804.

I thank you for your last kind and candid epistle, though it was a great deal shorter than it should have been. You would receive mine from Spott before your complaints of my silence had well got out of your hands, and have blushed, I dare say, a sufficient expiation for your uncharitableness.

I am glad there is any thing in the Review to please your fastidious taste, and most glad to find that you are actually at work upon something to make the next number still better. Your's has been a deplorable desertion, my dear Horner; and has really weighed very heavily upon my spirits: for our sake, for my sake, for your own sake, and for God's sake, do set about Malthus immediately, and by the labour of one week save yourself from the penitence and reproaches of many months. I cannot vary my exhortations more; you have worn out my whole stock of obtestations.

I do not dissent from Brougham's Anti-Œconomics, and I am almost perfectly certain that the doctrine of these theorists is absurd: and I am only confirmed in that impression, when *you* put on your most profound countenance, and tell me that neither you nor I understand properly what it means. When you expound it, I engage to listen with the utmost patience, and to weigh it with the most respectful attention. But I do not quite agree with Brougham in what he has said of Lauderdale's view of the effect of capital. I am not sure that his Lordship has not blundered, and am persuaded, at any rate, that the thing may be simplified; but I do not think Brougham has done justice

either to the author or the subject in that article, though I have not time now to tell you why. The article, however, is excellent, and takes a fine range. The said Brougham, I understand, has emigrated, so he writes me, but with what view he does not explain. He has left a political article for us; and says he has engaged several Royal Society men for others, to the extent of two sheets in all; he fights very well with his own hand, but I do not in general approve of his choice of seconds.

You say I write too little: my time is so much taken up by dunning my "tardy ministers," that I can scarcely do any thing else; and begin to suspect that the office of editor should be separated from that of author, in this as in other cases. I am forced, too, as patron of the feast, to take my place last, and sometimes find the table full before I am aware. For next number, however, I project great things, though nothing that can afford an important article. I think of giving an analysis of Brougham's Colonial Policy, Richardson's Letters, Barrow's Travels, and Sir W. Jones's Life. When will Wordsworth and Southey come forth? I shall try to give you a little pointed criticism then. Do you know anybody who would give an elegant account of Delille's Æneis, and compare it prettily with the Georgics? Your Oxford professor of poetry, perhaps, might undertake this; I wish you could endeavour to make him attack something. Do you not see Campbell?—what is he about? Write me very soon and very fully of your whole state and condition, moral, physical, political and literary. I have bestowed my last drop of ink upon you, and can only say that I am, dear Horner, always most truly yours,

F. JEFFREY.

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JOURNAL. "*26th August.*—Mr. Playfair opened a conversation with me first about the scheme which they lately agitated at Edinburgh for a new Encyclopædia, about which he said they were at one time very sanguine, but dropped it at last, from the difficulty of finding a proper person who would undertake the superintendance of the work as editor. The booksellers had made him a very liberal offer; but it was a slavery to which he would not submit. Mr. Stewart had not promised any thing specially, but favoured the work generally. Mr. Playfair then went on to say, that Cranstoun* had afterwards suggested "a much prettier thing," a course of literature to which we should contribute separate treatises on the different departments of science and literature; that he undertook to mention it to me, that Mr. Stewart caught the idea with great favour, and had himself suggested the subject which he should like to treat, *Criticism*, and Mr. Playfair said he spoke more zealously and confidently about this than he was in the habit of doing on such matters. Mr. Playfair suggested likewise to Stewart, a treatise on logic; but he did not acquiesce. Mr. Playfair said he himself was ready to begin immediately to his department, pure mathematics and physical geography, upon which he was engaged at any rate; but there was a great difficulty in finding persons to fill many of the departments—grammar, for instance, physics, &c. Robison was the man naturally thought of for physics, but he never can bring himself to write in an elementary manner; Mr. Stewart spoke of Dr. Gregory for grammar, but he also writes too much at large, and with bad taste. Mr. Playfair asked me about

* George Cranstoun, Esq.; afterwards Lord Corehouse.

Brougham, observing very justly that, had he remained at Edinburgh, he would have been the man for editor of the Encyclopædia; I told him fairly, that I should not expect that Brougham would bestow that perseverance in composition and minute execution, on which the merits of elementary treatises must very much depend, and that at any rate he was for the present wholly absorbed in political schemes, with the view of bringing himself into action; though I thought it not an improbable event, if he were disappointed in his immediate views, that he might bury himself for the remainder of his life in retirement, devoted to science and literature, and occupied with some vast scheme of literary ambition. 1804. Æt. 27.

"For myself, I did not wait to be invited, but without hesitation offered to give elements of political economy, if that subject was not already occupied, which I found it was not, and provided I should not be called upon for some years. This falls in very well with the plan of outlines, which I have long intended to form for my own use, as a sort of systematic common-place book, in which I might register the results either of my own investigations, or of such as are published from time to time. It gives me an opportunity too of associating my name with those of Stewart and Playfair, a greater honour than I ever had boldness to think of."

### Letter XLIX. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

Frognal, Hampstead, 13th September, 1804.

I rejoiced much, my excellent Murray, to see your handwriting once more. It gives me some

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satisfaction to find that you have not lost sight of the subject which I was anxious you should examine. The occasion will recur again, perhaps soon enough; and it would really be a disgrace to the Scotch bar, that another such occasion should find them as unprepared, as they and the constitutionalists of parliament were upon the last.*

The discussion about the expediency of a public prosecutor lies a little away from this constitutional question, but is one of very high importance. I have never thought closely upon the subject; though I have long seen it lying at a particular part of the field, in which I have been, as you know, trying for years to raise game, with the hope once of hunting it all over. This hope cools more and more, I find, even to freezing; but I like the game still better than the sport, and, provided it is brought in, I am comforted for my own want of success. A public prosecutor appears an useful institution in a country not yet subdued to law; especially if that country is provincially administered under another in which justice is more systematised, manners more tame, and the privileges of rank more equalised. In the circumstances of Scotland, from the accession to the end perhaps of the Seven Years' War, when I consider the Jurisdiction Act as having completed its practical operation, the office of Lord Advocate may have been of use; perhaps, for the same reason, a similar officer in Ireland would give energy as well as purity to the system of penal law, and would accelerate civilisation. In this view of the

* The case here referred to was a charge brought forward in the House of Commons, on the 6th and 22d of June, 1804, against the Lord Advocate (the Right Honourable Charles Hope), of conduct towards a Mr. Morrison, which, in the words of the motion, was said to have been "oppressive, illegal, and contrary to his official duty." The motion was negatived. — See *Hansard's Debates*. — Ed.

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subject, which I am throwing out upon very loose conjectures, I should consider Scotland as now emancipated from the disorders that rendered an advocate necessary. But what are you to substitute in his place? the *instance*, as you term it, of the injured party is obviously inadequate, would lead to the impunity of crimes, and would obliterate the distinction, which appears quite sound, and a great step in the progress of legal improvements between criminal and civil jurisprudence. The system of common informers hardly deserves the name of system; it is a very rude clumsy device, and sometimes very troublesome in its operation. „It is clumsy, upon the principle, that what is left to be every man's business will either become nobody's, or be assumed by those who had better attend to their own affairs, and who will manage their own so much the worse for meddling with this; and it frequently has proved very troublesome and impertinent in England, where corrupt people have tried to make a profit, and conceited fanatics to glorify God, by the revival of penal prosecutions, which the necessities of commerce or more rational manners had sunk into disuse. All the West of England was set on fire about two years ago, and the woollen manufactures in a manner suspended, by some attornies who commenced *qui tam* informations upon the statute of apprenticeships, which had been practically repealed in that great seat of opulence and industry. And we have a society in town for the suppression of vice, which will probably be overcome, like the laws they would revive, by the good sense of the times; but which, if allowed to have any effect, can have no other than to abridge the pleasures of the lower classes, and to propagate among the class just above them those views of canting,

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I remember having seen some inquiries about me in a letter to your brother, which I always intended to take a little notice of the first time I should write to you. Indeed, if I had thought the matter of much consequence to myself at the time, I should have satisfied you immediately; or rather have been beforehand with you, for in spite of your distance, you are the only one with whom I can communicate quite unreservedly upon all my private affairs. And I have always found that any thing interesting to me becomes of still more interest, in its relation to myself, after I have imparted it to you. This summer, I have allowed myself to be recognised more expressly as an adherent of the Opposition, than I ever had an opportunity of doing before. I did *not* dine at Carlton House; but at Lord Fitzwilliam's, with a set of partisans, "black spirits and white." The advances were made to me, and, after taking the subject into serious deliberation, I resolved to take advantage of them. You have known, as long as myself, the cast of my political opinions, as well as my wish that politics should be joined to law in the occupations of my future life, if indeed my schemes of life shall ever be matured into real occupations. To hold an efficient character in politics, a man must choose a party, if the state presents one to whose leading declarations and views he can honestly subscribe. Now, though there are several parts of the former conduct of Opposition which I cannot approve of, and some men attached to it whom I never can esteem, yet the maxims and principles professed by Mr. Fox

are congenial upon all great questions to my feelings and conviction. I am not giving you this as an apology for myself, but as the deliberate mode in which I considered the subject before I came to a resolution. I accepted Lord Fitzwilliam's invitation, and permitted my name to be put down in the list of a new club to which Fox, Windham, Sheridan, &c. belong. It will be very comic to you, and therefore I cannot omit the circumstance, that this club meets at Budd's in Pall Mall, where Cobbett's works are published, under the sign of the Crown, Bible, and Mitre. 1804. Æt. 27.

I do not think that for a long, long time, my political activities will proceed any further. For my view of the matter is this. Law must be my business and first object, because I have no fortune ; I can permit nothing, therefore, to interfere with the necessary preparations for professional practice. Then again, I have no chance of getting into parliament these many years, whatever my chance may be at last. Now, to be an *active* politician out of parliament is, in my way of thinking, neither a very useful nor a very respectable character; and to be at the tail of a party is quite as much below my education and my schemes, as to be near the head of one is above my capacity, or indeed my inclinations. To be useful and eminent as a constitutional lawyer, and to turn to the public advantage those studies with regard to internal legislation which I still continue to prosecute, compose very nearly the ideal object which I long ago set before my ambition ; I believe I have regulated my ambition, and sketched this " beau ideal," both calmly and with a desire to be right. As for the splendid hazardous pursuits of foreign policy and ministerial intrigue, into which our friend Brougham is plunging

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himself with a resolution to succeed that seems to insure success, and will at all events secure distinction, they are as unsuitable to the habits of my mind as to its powers; too bustling for the indolent predilection (which grows upon me hourly) for domestic and confined society, and not of magnitude, I will acknowledge, adequate to my idea of the highest sort of ambition. Lord Bacon and Dugald Stewart have made me a little of a visionary, as I believe you have sometimes thought; I am sure Brougham must have thought so always. But I have not yet reasoned myself out of those shades; the "fantastic spell" is unbroken, so I must even go on still "*perque domos vacuas et inania regna.*" But I am forgetting the very humble subject, from which I have run off into a sort of declamation. It was under the impressions which I have been endeavouring to describe, and which you will not think new, that I took the step I lately did; deeming it advisable to form an *early* connection with the public men who maintain such principles and views as appear to me just, and that the opportunity offered was one which allowed me to form that connection in the most respectable manner, and without the imposition of any personal fetters. The first application was made to me by Petty, in name of Lord Robert Spencer, with whom I am not acquainted, at a time that a literary project in aid of politics was thought of, which is now dropt; and after I had signified my ready acquiescence, came the invitation from Lord Fitzwilliam, at the suggestion, I have some reason to conjecture, of Lord Lauderdale. Lauderdale, you know, is not a character altogether suitable to my taste, nor have I yet, in spite of his steadiness to an unsuccessful party, entire confidence in the purity of his politics; but I

have traced him on more than one occasion speaking indulgently of me, with the intention of doing me a service; and I cannot be insensible to this unsolicited attention. I did not forget this consideration, in the subject which I have desired Jeffrey to consult you upon; but it appeared to me wholly eclipsed by the duty of acting with justice to Brougham, who in his absence has been so wantonly attacked.

I ought to apologise to you, both for the egotism and for the double postage of this letter. But it is so long since we gossiped together, that I have indulged all my inclinations to sit long, and talk over my own concerns with you. I thank you for your kind inquiries about my family; they like Hampstead very much, and have made the house very comfortable. Let me hear from you again very soon, with all your sentiments favourable or unfavourable about the foresaid egotism.

Ever yours faithfully,

FRA. HORNER.

JOURNAL. "1*st October.*—Employed very closely for a week in investigating the policy of bounties upon exported corn; the results sent to Jeffrey. In this method of investigation, one cannot be without distrust, having no security that some necessary steps in the process may not be missed. The *method* must be improved, by the discovery of some principle, that shall at once abridge and make it more general."*

* In the ninth number of the Edinburgh Review, published in October, 1804, there are two articles by Mr. Horner.

1. "Letters on Silesia, written during a Tour in the Years 1800, 1801. By John Quincy Adams."

2. "Observations on the Bounty upon Exported Corn."

He had not contributed any thing to the Review since his article on the Correspondence of Louis XVI., in October, 1803 (see p. 228.)—ED.

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LETTER L. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, Temple, 3d November, 1804.

I have just had the satisfaction of seeing your brother. It gives me the most sincere pleasure to find that your good mother continues to have tolerable health; I am sure she has no belief of the reverence I entertain for her.

People are coming to town very slowly. We had but four clubbists yesterday, at our first meeting. My only regret about this is that we have not been able to show Thomson* any of our lions. I have been selfish enough to keep him as much as possible to myself; it was so long since I had enjoyed the cordiality and free spirit of an Edinburgh friend. I had languished for it very much; for as yet I have found no substitutes here. I am almost glad to hear that you don't mean to come up till the long vacation, though it is long to look for; I shall then be able to see something of you.

I hardly know what people say or feel now about politics; having lived almost out of the recollection of them for some months past. This seizure of Rumbold renews of course those regrets and disgusts, which are every now and then repeated by fresh violations of the good old usages, that once made war itself a proof of civilisation. There is nothing preserved that gives it a character of greatness or refinement. Shall we ever see those rules again in force, that were the pride of Europe? The present Europe, I fear, is not that in which we were born six and twenty years ago. Had they been only violated on one side, there might have been

* Thomas Thomson, Esq.

hopes. But the country which ought to stand forward the systematic assertor of them, and which is conceived by its best inhabitants to be really placed in that important station, has in truth betrayed the cause from a want of magnanimity in its rulers. We have been tempted by the short-sighted argument of retaliation, and for the pedlar profits of a precarious commerce, to imitate both the meanness and the ferocity of our adversaries. The violent invasion of neutral rights, the prostitution of the diplomatic character, the outrage to decency and private feelings in the publication of intercepted correspondence, unfortunately may be retorted upon ourselves when we bring them as charges against France. I understand there is an entire suspension of all intercourse between this country and France, even for the necessary purposes of belligerent accommodation. In the course of this last autumn, I looked a little into Thucydides; and was struck with the melancholy resemblance between that destruction of an international commonwealth, which he narrates, and the one we are now witnessing. Among other things, he expressly remarks the moral revolution that took place in the conduct of the hostile states towards each other. 1804. Æt. 27.

I have this moment received a letter from you; I will not describe all the pleasure it has given me. Some parts of it I must think over before I can write upon them; so you will hear from me soon again.

Believe me ever yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER LI. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

Temple, 13th November, 1804.

I intended to have sent you a letter by Thomson, who left me on Friday evening; but I

1804. found myself disposed, when it came to the last, to
Æt. 27. lounge away as much of my time as I could with him. There are very few of our friends more to my taste than he; and as we had become thoroughly accustomed to each other before I left Edinburgh, this revival of our intimacy seems to have breathed a second spring upon me. His information is very much diversified, and, just like his library, brought together in a desultory way to be sure, but with excellent judgment in the selection of the best sorts. Then his temper is so manly and cheerful; and, with all his seeming calmness and suspense, has a sufficient portion of that vice of admiration, which it is the fashion to quiz, but which I am old-fashioned enough to be very unwilling to dispense with.

Your last two or three letters, upon personal subjects, have afforded me very great comfort and delight. Your account of your own views with regard to the profession are exactly what I have always represented to myself, in thinking of you. Party politics at Edinburgh are a miserable waste of mind; from the unavoidable disadvantages of a provincial residence, they must narrow the judgment and debase the temper, in the worst manner. And what is to be got by this sacrifice, that might not be almost certainly secured by an independent and resolute cultivation of the genuine qualifications that belong to the profession? The crown offices are a fair and honourable object of ambition, if gained and held as Blair* has done. The political agency of the Lord Advocate is becoming daily of less use, in proportion as Scotland becomes more incorporated with the other counties of the kingdom; and that office will surely be more

* Robert Blair, Esq., Solicitor General, afterwards Lord President of the Court of Session.—Ed.

dignified and agreeable when it is a legal honour merely, like that of our Attorney General. In the management of elections, and General Assemblies, and town councils, &c. he has been hitherto no better than a sub-clerk of the Treasury; but of late years, that is, ever since the complete subjugation of the Highlands, this seems to have been very unnecessary — a poor effort, perhaps, in those who have held the office, to preserve that sort of state which belongs to any thing like executive discretion, but which cannot be maintained when there are no longer any emergencies that call for discretion or execution. 1804. Æt. 27.

There is no object of ambition now at the Scotch bar, but professional distinction, from great knowledge and powers of public speaking; nor should I be surprised if even the two silk gowns were in future to be earned very often by eminence in these respects, independently of all factious connections. It often gives me pleasure to reflect, that the men who form your race of contemporaries at the bar, as well as that above you, Thomson, Cranstoun, &c. are of this honourable description; very active and decided in their opinions upon public measures, but without any tincture of party. Now that you are come together and understand each other, nothing is likely to break your union; and it is in your power to exert an influence of the best kind, both by giving a tone of independence to the bar, and, from its necessary effect in such a town, communicating that fashion a little farther. Is it not likewise well worth the thoughts of all of you, who are not yet immersed in the luxuries of practice, to consider the opportunities that are presented by the present state of Scotch jurisprudence? The dissatisfaction that prevails, the real imperfections of its administration, and the idle

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projects of new constitutions which (I am persuaded) can do little or no good, are a sufficient proof that an opportunity exists, which ought to produce a corresponding effort. Whoever take advantage of it will establish their name; and it would be contrary to what has happened on similar occasions, if individuals are not produced by this opportunity. Why should not your set seize it? It is to be done only by an accurate and deep study of principles, and of the errors that are committed in the administration of your excellent system. A few admirable models of practice, and some judicious publications, particularly Reports, will do more than a thousand acts of parliament; the great business is to introduce the authority of logic into the Court of Session, and let her dictate close, correct, and consistent habits of discussion and judgment.

This subject is far from being new to me, and I am quite earnest about it. The opportunities of an original reputation in the law of England are gone by; they were seized, as they presented themselves, for instance, by Northington who organised the chancery and the peculiar rules of its system, by Holt who gave form to the law of personal property, that novelty of modern times, and by your great relation*, who collected the principles of commercial jurisprudence. We have now only to apply the cases which these lawgivers have left us, until some other change shall be slowly effected in the arrangements of property; I see no opportunity likely to arise out of our present state in England, except in the creation of an agricultural code, when leases shall become more frequent, and cultivation more properly a sort of trade, as it ought to be. When that necessity arrives, we shall probably

* Lord Mansfield.

be forced to borrow from you; you are welcome in the mean time to copy as much from us as will do you good. What you would do best to imitate, is not our particular principles, which are often very arbitrary and technical, but our logic, as I said before; that is, our mode of proceeding, the precision of inquiry and statement, the caution with which we proceed upon all new cases, and the strict observance of precedents. If this method of jurisprudence shall be introduced into Scotland, and well established, you will ultimately have an immense advantage over us, in beginning to fix your rules in a more cultivated state of society, and after a more thorough discussion of general principles. There are some branches in which you have clearly the advantage of us already, if you would make the most of it; such as in bankrupt law, some parts of the law of real property, and some parts (I must confess) of the Crown law. 1804. Æt. 27.

If I am right in my general idea, is there not a fine opportunity to make a name at the Scotch bar? If a man would devote himself to the object resolutely, pursue it systematically, and with a great preparation of learning, his success must be certain. It is easier no doubt to destroy than to build up; yet within the same period of time that the President has thrown every thing loose that was fixed before, might a person with the same advantage of situation, and a store of contrary qualifications, not only trace back his steps, but pursue the opposite progress a good way beyond the point from which he set out. I fear you will think I talk very glibly on a subject with which I can be but little acquainted; but I am talking only to you, and all this makes itself so very clear to me, that I cannot suspect myself to be very far wrong. Now, for the execution of the project.

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Suppose the person or persons destined to effect this revolution thoroughly prepared for it, by a deep knowledge of their own law, and a ready command of general views. How are they to set about it? I have spoken already of Reports; and until you have your Decisions reported upon another plan, very little good can be done. A case without the reasons of judgment is good for very little. You will tell me, that the present judgments are often given without any foundation even of attempted reasoning. No matter, let us have a faithful picture of the manner in which they are actually given, and if it does not shame the present generation of judges to a better mode, it will infallibly prepare a better for the next. There are difficulties, I know, thrown in the way of all such attempts by the Court itself; yet I cannot believe but that a dexterous and well-mannered management might get the better of these. What if another sort of thing be first tried; reports of cases of an older date, upon which the opinions of the judges who decided them can be recovered. Among the repositories of those who have sat upon the bench, there must be materials for such a work. Thomson will publish one day or other the manuscripts of Lord Hailes; with your advantages of intercourse among the judges, and your father's papers, something else might be done in the same way. A judicious compilation of this sort, published seasonably, could not fail to produce a considerable effect.

I have some other schemes to propose to you; but these I find we must put off to another sheet. If these long-winded dissertations oppress you, pray give me a hint. I was led into the present by thinking very anxiously of your professional pro-

spects. Only be true to yourself. My dear Murray, I not only expect, but demand by virtue of our contract, a return to this in kind. Your brother is quite well. 1804. Æt. 27

Affectionately yours,
FRA. HORNER.

LETTER LII. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, Temple, 15th November, 1804.

When William gave me your letter to-day, he said he should probably have a frank to-morrow or Saturday, and would give me a place in it. Under that hope, I take another sheet of large paper, to provide against all accidents, knowing that prolixity is the sin which doth most easily beset me when I am writing to you. I am just come in from Lincoln's-Inn Hall, and, according to my custom, sit down to strong coffee and lounging books while the process of digestion is going on, so troublesome to students in the law. I throw aside Dryden's prose works, one of my greatest favourites among lounging books, to gossip for a little. If you find me more than usually dull, you will have indulgence enough to advert to the present operations of my gastric juice.

I did not quite finish my homily upon Scotch law; if I recollect right, I left off at my *eighteenth* head, viz. upon Faculty Decisions. You will of course take all that I have thrown out, as the beginning merely of a discussion with you, and all the positiveness you may discover there was only to provoke you to contradiction; as I well know you are no "granter of propositions," which used to be Sydney's last term of intellectual reproach. We have often talked formerly

1804. Æt. 27. of the great utility of treatises upon detached titles of Scotch law; and there can be no doubt of it. They would form an essential part of that scheme of systematic reformation, which I propose you and your friends should undertake. But they must be executed upon a better plan, than any we have yet seen. Hitherto they have been all too loose and vague, to produce any effect. A method must be tried, more legal and technical in its form, and more logically precise and accurate. There are some capital subjects for such treatises at present, of which we have often spoken. There is another sort of composition, which might be made eminently subservient to the important object of the others, and the execution of which would be still pleasanter, but still more difficult than any of them; I mean *critical* lives of a few of the most eminent of the Scotch lawyers, such as Stair, Dirleton, M'Queen, and perhaps a very few more; *critical*, as to their professional character, the cast of their legal genius and views, the effect which they had upon the system, and the effect which they attempted to produce. This would be a more delicate, skilful and powerful mode of introducing such remarks, as the present aspect of the Court of Session suggests, than any other perhaps. It could not be adequately executed, however, without much erudition in law, and a profound habitual sense of that which is the genuine manner and just logic of administrative jurisprudence. After all, however, the great matter is, that you should educate yourselves in such a manner, that when you get possession of the bench, as most of you will of course, you may guard against the errors which have done so much mischief; some of these arise no doubt from the constitution of the court, or rather are sheltered by that constitution. You must take it, however, as

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it is; for I look upon all changes of that by parliament to be chimerical. The only feasible one I ever heard of is the opening of the other courts to civil actions. I apprehend "the Session" ought not to be touched.

I suppose you know that Smith* begins to lecture on Moral Philosophy next Saturday at the Royal Institution. You would be amused to hear the account he gives of his own qualifications for the task, and his mode of manufacturing philosophy; he will do the thing very cleverly, I have little doubt, as to general manner, and he is sufficiently aware of all the forbearances to be observed. Profound lectures on metaphysics would be unsuitable to the place; he may do some good, if he makes the subject amusing. He will contribute, like his other associates of the institution, to make the real blue-stockings a little more disagreeable than ever, and sensible women a little more sensible. It seems to me for the interest of general conversation, that these subjects should not be quite so unknown to them, as to be thought unintelligible pedantry if mentioned in their company; and the impertinence of those who set up as adepts is the price we must pay for this important acquisition. Your chemists and metaphysicians in petticoats are altogether out of nature, that is, when they make a trade or distinction of such pursuits; but when they take a little general learning as an accomplishment, they keep it in very tolerable order. Tell me if I take this rightly; I know it is not well settled, and men of letters usually lean too much on one side.

Good afternoon, my dear Murray.

FRA. HORNER.

* The Rev. Sydney Smith.

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LETTER LIII. TO THOMAS THOMSON, ESQ.

My dear Thomson, The Temple, 21st Nov. 1804.

You know how restless I shall be till you tell me something of the second and third volumes of the Philosophy of the Human Mind.* The thought of having so much to come quite delights me. How far will this carry the work? I hope the course of political economy is not given up for want of students; the number, to be sure, has always been small, but then it was composed only of such as take to the subject in earnest. If peradventure there shall be twenty found there, for twenty's sake it ought to be saved. The effect which these lectures are already producing, by sending out every year a certain number who have imbibed a small portion of his spirit, is so great, that I cannot consent to any suspension of it.

Our friend Sydney gave his first lecture on Saturday; I was not there, but all the accounts I have collected from different sorts of people agree in its favour, and that it took extremely well. You were inquired for by Mrs. Smith on Sunday evening, where, with Whishaw and Peter†, we kept it up till a very tolerably good hour.

I see a new edition advertised in the Scotch papers of Playfair's Euclid; tell me whether there are any

* "I have just come from the Stewarts, where I have been gossiping for two or three hours. Mr. Stewart is far advanced in the composition of his intended work. It will extend to two volumes, and will not appear till next year, that is, till next winter, or the following spring. I hope soon to give you a more particular account of it. To give himself more leisure, he is not to lecture this winter on political economy. He was much delighted with the new edition of the "Wealth of Nations," "for the benefit of the mechanic, the wholesale dealer, and the shopkeeper." (Letter from Mr. Thomson, dated Edinburgh, 14th November.)

† The Rev. P. Elmsley. See note, page 247.

material alterations or enlargements of it. For one good note in his own manner, I will most cheerfully purchase this also, though I have the former. We talked in Windsor Forest of a selection of beauties from the old English prose writers; I hear there is one to appear immediately, by Mr. Basil Montagu, formerly of Jesus, Cambridge. I do not know him, nor have I heard how he is qualified for such a choice; except the circumstance that he has lived a good deal among the set of men who have revived of late years the fashion of reading those authors; so that he is probably aware of the striking passages on which their admiration rests. 1804. ÆT. 27.

What shall I tell you in the way of politics? Every morning, we have some new disgust or some new puzzle to swallow. This excommunicating bull of Talleyrand is the largest yet set before us; is it to be bolted too? What an opportunity all these outrages, on *both* sides, would make for a Grotius, if we had one, to advocate the cause of sense and civilisation! A slight change is now spoken of in the foreign department, on account of Lord Harrowby's bad health; Canning to have the green box, and Sturges Bourne to be Treasurer.

Tell Jeffrey to write to me soon. I do not take his corn tract for a letter; besides, his arguments are so strong, and his handwriting so unusually execrable, that I have not made up my mind about it yet. You must let me hear how you proceed in your antiquarian researches; you are aware of my omnivorous curiosity, and of my schemes for being somewhat of a Jack of all trades.

Remember me to all my friends at the club, and believe me faithfully yours,

FRA. HORNER.

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LETTER LIV. TO FRANCIS JEFFREY, ESQ.

My dear Jeffrey, Temple, 11th January, 1805.

I received your letter this morning, which there are sterling good reasons for acknowledging by return of post. You were relieved I trust, from all difficulties, by the arrival of Brougham's packet; it would be new indeed, if any thing connected with Brougham were to fail in dispatch. He is the surest and most voluminous among the sons of men.

I am very glad to hear you were to be forced to write for your own Review; for I have lamented with every body else the appearance of that lethargy, which you complain of. I could scold you severely about this, if I had not done it before.

Hallam spoke to me about Ranken's history, and will do it for you. He is a very able man; full of literature, and historical knowledge: but I do not know how he will write. Pillans, I will speak to again; though I hardly know what he can do. There is a vigilance and judgment about trifles, which men only get by living in a crowd; and those are the trifles of detail, on which the success of execution depends. I long to see the "Last Minstrel;" to renew the pleasure I received from parts which I heard. I would rather have *you* review it than any body I can think of, for I try in vain to think of any very good critic here who is not a friend of Scott's: you must even do it; but you will of course do it with a little of the partiality, which we all feel for the author, and which it would be both disagreeable to yourself and affected to attempt to avoid.

Your promise of an autumnal visit reconciles me to the loss of you in spring; the greater pleasure I

should then have in seeing more of you compensates the delay. You know of course that you do not see London at that season; but green England is better. I flatter myself much with the idea of Murray being here likewise in autumn; when we can talk to one another at a small table, or in the open fields. But the "blazing squares" will get the better of his resolutions, I take it, and I shall be put off with the pleasure of seeing his titles every morning in the Morning Post. Remember me to the said dissipated youth; I have not heard of him for a long time, but both of you have the same justification of your late silence, that I had sickened you with some epistles of unconscionable length. Remember me particularly to Mrs. Jeffrey, and believe me

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Most truly yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER LV. TO SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH, BOMBAY.

My dear Sir James, Temple, 19th January, 1805.

Though I write by one of the ships now going out, this overland dispatch gives me an opportunity of collecting for you some of the news of the last two months. Some of these are very amusing to the bystanders; more intrigues and changes, but all after the old fashion; virtually another change of administration, but conducted in the approved mode to which we have been accustomed for about four and forty years. The said forty-four years seem to have bestowed a masterly experience in such matters.

You know, of course, the whole history of Pitt's return to power, and the expressions of contumely

1805. Æt. 27. and personal indignation with which he joined the combined Oppositions in precipitating Addington. During the prorogation of Parliament, which was unusually prolonged to the 15th of January, various attempts are said to have been made by ministers to reinforce themselves; particularly against Carleton House, by the offer of Ireland to Moira, and of a high volunteer command to the Prince. These were rejected, it is said, (a phrase which you must hold as repeated through the remainder of this chronicle), but it is so said, with great spirit and dignity; a sort of cabinet being held in Pall-Mall, composed of the heads of the combined Opposition. After this, some other unsuccessful attempts are supposed to have been made. The other party looked forward to a very promising show of numbers; Addington in correspondence with Sir W. Pulteney, about forming a band of allies by themselves; the former declining to boast that he had a party, but admitting that there were about twenty-seven gentlemen in the House who "thought with him." The Spanish war, especially the violent and unprecedented mode of its commencement, were looked upon as the grand topics of attack; a vehement pamphlet against government upon this subject came out under the name of the author of the "Cursory Remarks;" and Lord Carrington, I have been told, expressed himself at Lord Keith's table, not more than six weeks ago, that he understood "the *fellow* Addington" was to lead in a motion of inquiry about it. Another rumour is, that Sheridan has in his possession a jotting of the terms of some such or other motion, which he and Addington had begun to settle together. However all this may be, nothing could surpass the surprise we were all thrown into in Christmas week, when it was announced that a formal re-

conciliation had taken place, in presence of the King, between Pitt and Addington. So far as I had opportunities of observing the first impression of it, it was strongly disapproved by Pitt's intelligent admirers, and lowered him a little in the city. The King breakfasted next morning at the lodge in Richmond Park, and on the 7th instant Addington dined at Kew, *tête-à-tête;* an honour not conferred on any subject since Lord Bute. He is now Viscount Sidmouth, and President of the Council. He stipulated for the entrance of Lord Buckinghamshire also into the cabinet, which Pitt peremptorily refused, and the King granted. You will easily suppose what language is held by the party which I wish well to, upon these transactions; they consider Pitt as having sunk in the opinion of the public, by yielding to so hard a necessity for the sake of office, and as being no longer the efficient minister of the state. I cannot conceive why he did not make a bold stand against the entrance of Addington into the cabinet, for the said Addington never could have been forced upon the country again, as ostensibly the sole minister, and Pitt might have trusted that the King would in no event have had recourse to Fox. All the appointments, and stories of appointments, within the last week, are of an Addingtonian complexion. Nat. Bond is made Attorney General; Vansittart and Bragge Privy Councillors. A large living at Taplow had been solicited from the Chancellor by Lord Camden; it is given to Vansittart's cousin. Lord Abercorn is made a Knight of the Garter, and the number of the order is enlarged on purpose to introduce him. Osborn Markham had received his dismission from the Navy Board, where he was put by Addington, and on his return he is now replaced. Lord Sidmouth made no bargain for Tierney, because he had

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been trying a separate one for himself; nor for Charles Yorke, because he did not profess to join the Addingtonian band of opposition to the Defence Bill last summer. All this is not only real predominance, but looks very like the conscious enjoyment and use of it. In the conversation in the House of Peers upon the Address, Hawkesbury scrupled not to say, that whatever improvements have lately taken place in the supply of the disposable force, are to be ascribed to the Army of Reserve Bill, passed in the *last* administration, or, (as we say), in the administration before the last.

The King's speech announced an offer of pacific dispositions from the Emperor Napoleon, to which he had returned an answer, that he must first consult those continental powers, with whom he has lately formed a confidential intercourse upon the general state of Europe. All parties seem agreed, that peace upon any other footing would be unavailing. There does not seem much expectation of this sort of peace at present. The Emperor will probably persist a little longer in his idea of excluding us from the pale of continental policy; and in that case, I hope we shall all have pride and wisdom to persist in asserting so essential a part of our power and defence. There was no division upon the Address; but the conversation between Fox, Pitt, and Windham, furnished us the bill of fare for the spring-supplies within the year, a new constitution of the army, continental alliances, on Pitt's side;—Catholic emancipation, the outrage against the law of nations in the mode of commencing hostilities against Spain, and the entire failure of the famous Defence Bill, on the part of Opposition. Windham has given notice for next week of the same

motion, a committee into the state of the defence, which he and Pitt supported jointly last spring, against Addington. But while the King is as efficient as at present, we shall have the satisfaction of seeing things go on in their usual course; though he did make his gracious speech from the throne, in one of those flowing brigadier wigs which one sees in the old portraits of King William and Marlborough. 1805. ÆT. 27.

I confine myself to these gossiping trifles, which will show you what we continue to trifle about here. They may serve to supply the chasm of news, till you get the papers of this month. I blame myself very much for having been so long in writing to you and Lady Mackintosh; there is a folly about one in writing letters to a great distance, as if (to use a phrase of Windham's) it were necessary to brew them of a stronger body for exportation. I beg you will remember me in the most grateful manner to Lady Mackintosh, whom I never think of but as one to whose kind notice I owe much of the best society I enjoy now in London, and most of the happiest days I passed while you were here. When the members of these parties come together, we scarcely fail on any occasion to remind ourselves of them, by some fragments of conversation that have made us better and wiser for life. I dine to-day at Boddington's, where most of us will meet: if I owed nothing to you but the friendship of Sharp, I never could repay even that. I am assiduous to make myself worthy of it, by bringing myself as frequently as I can in contact with his strong and purified understanding. In my letters by the ship, I will put together as much literary and private tattle as I can collect; I must not forget to tell you, that the Archbishop died yes-

1805. Æt. 27. terday morning, and Sutton is generally spoken of as destined for Lambeth. Lord Rosslyn died last week. I beg my kindest respects to my friend Erskine.

Ever faithfully and affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER LVI. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, London, 21st Feb. 1805.

I have several letters of yours to acknowledge, and a great many points in some former ones to go back upon. I have been however very much occupied of late; the little business I have harasses me more than you will easily imagine, both because I have to acquire the very rudiments on every case that comes into my hands, and because this uncertainty of the ground I stand upon increases all my other anxieties. I cannot prevail on myself either to forego the pleasures, and indeed the advantages, of society in the afternoon, which at this season is at high tide; my acquaintances increase more rapidly than I care for, so that I begin to be fastidious again, and to make a choice at my discretion. I foresee very distinctly that this round of dinners will not last many years, if I get at all into business; so that I think it advisable to frolic while 'tis May, and by a provident scheme of selection from the immense mass, to lay up a small store of lasting materials for the Saturdays and Sundays of the long Chancery winter.

I contrived to get the second day of the debate on the Spanish papers; William* and I went down toge-

* William Murray of Henderland, Esq., and of the Middle Temple, the elder brother of Mr. J. A. Murray.

ther. It was by no means a very satisfactory discussion of so important a transaction, nor was there much eloquence on either side. Fox was very slovenly, desultory, and incomplete; it is impossible for him to speak without inimitable execution in parts; but he took no great range of the subject, though one (I thought) most suitable to his taste and best power, nor did he seem to strike into the pith and heart of it. Pitt's reply was very angry and loud, full of palpable misrepresentations. The best hints as to the real substance of the case gleamed through the darkness and turbidness of Dr. Lawrence, who would fairly have talked his audience to death, if they had not coughed him to silence; his expectoration (to use a delicate phrase of Lord Ellenborough's) was dreadful to the hearer, but seemed to be full of knowledge and sense and acuteness, as I have always found him whenever I have had self-command sufficient to listen. There was one extraordinary oration that night,—Sir William Grant's; quite a master-piece of his peculiar and miraculous manner: conceive an hour and a half of syllogisms strung together in the closest tissue, so artfully clear that you think every successive inference unavoidable; so rapid that you have no leisure to reflect where you have been brought from, or to see where you are to be carried, and so dry of ornament or illustration or refreshment, that the attention is stretched—stretched—racked. All this is done without a single note. And yet, while I acknowledge the great vigour of understanding displayed in such performances, I have a heresy of my own about Grant's speaking; it does not appear to me of a parliamentary cast, nor suited to the discussions of a political assembly. The

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1805. Æt. 27. effect he produces is amazement at his power, not the impression of his subject; now this is a mortal symptom. Besides this, he gives me a suspicion of sophistry, which haunts me through his whole deduction; though I have nothing immediately to produce, I feel dissatisfied as if there were something that might be said. And after all, there are no trains of syllogism nor processes of intricate distinctions in subjects that are properly political. The wisdom, as well as the common feelings that belong to such subjects, lie upon the surface in a few plain and broad lines; there is a want of genius in being very ingenious about them, and it belongs to talents of the second order to proceed with a great apparatus of reasoning.

Your scheme of bringing together the honest and able men of the Scotch bar, and uniting them in confidence towards each other, will do more, if rightly managed, to reform the Court than any new act of parliament. We know here well, what an advantage is derived to the administration of justice, from the footing upon which the Bench and Bar are to each other; nor would the Court of Session, though fifteen* is a protecting number, feel it at all comfortable to conduct themselves as I have sometimes witnessed, under the inspection of a Bar formidable by real knowledge, mutual concert, and systematic good manners. The present period is more favourable for such a combination, than could have been found of late years, when the evil spirit of politics kept men so much asunder. You must proceed in all this with delicacy and reserve, and I have no doubt of your success. I have always been aware of the repulsion between two or three sets, all of which contain

* The number of Judges then composing the Court.

several men of strong powers and excellent principles; men too, who are quite formed, in spite of their past distance, to respect each other. I got myself a little into all of the sets; and some who appeared most fastidious and exclusive, proved, after a little cultivation, as candid as they are steadfast. Such men are the very sinews of a censorial jurisdiction.

I must reserve to another opportunity the further prosecution of these interesting topics, on which I beg you will continue to inform me of all your projects and meditations. I am resolute to continue a member of the Faculty of Advocates, and hope you will all consider me as still a learned brother. Many years hence, if we add business to years, we may perhaps have a little practical influence in the alleviation of these abuses on which we are speculating at present. We shall certainly be unprepared for the exertion of practical influence, unless we go on with our speculation.

I shall hear from you very soon, I trust, your final determination about your visit this year to England. And I shall not come to any decision about the employment of next autumn, till I hear of your plans.

Ever yours truly,

FRA. HORNER.

### LETTER LVII. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, Temple, 16th March, 1805.

I have just received your most kind and entertaining letter. I had delayed arranging my plans for the autumn, till I should hear from you; and till I hear

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from you again, I shall fix nothing. I have not seen the sea these two years, and I long for it impatiently. South Wales, the coast of Devonshire, Kent — anywhere, — I leave this arrangement wholly to you. I shall be ready to set out with you the very moment the old King takes off his brigadier wig. Our mode of travelling may be adjusted in a few seconds; and the duration of our excursion may be fairly left to accident.

Your account of Leslie's election interests me beyond any thing I have heard for a long while.* But you must tell me a thousand things more about it. In the first place, procure me, I beseech you earnestly, every document about it that you can lay your hands upon; especially the Protest, any paragraphs in the newspapers that may have been published by either party, Dr. Hunter's letter if you can, or any other morsels of correspondence. I shall preserve them in the same bundle with my copies of Aikenhead's conviction, and Lord Anstruther's letter†: and shall enjoin my heirs, in the whole line of substitution, to collect similar documents from century to century, by way of proving, some thousand years hence, that priests are ever the same.

You must have heard by this time, that the Catholic delegates, after an unsuccessful application to Pitt, and deliberating for some time upon their next step, resolved finally to entrust their important measure to Opposition. It will be lost, of course; but it may be of great moment even to the *immediate* tranquillity of

* An attempt was made to exclude Mr. Leslie from the Chair of Mathematics, by a charge of infidelity, founded upon a note in his Treatise on Heat, in which he says that "Mr. Hume is the first who has treated of causation in a truly philosophic manner." For an account of this celebrated case, see an article by Mr. Horner in the Edinburgh Review for October, 1805. — Ed.

† See Appendix B.

Ireland, that the powerful Catholics of that country shall be satisfied how large a proportion of the talents, property and influence of the imperial parliament is placed on their side. You may take the following fact as quite authentic, though I am not myself possessed of the original authority on which it rests; very recently, an offer of assistance from the Emperor of France was transmitted through the Irish directory at Paris to the heads of the rebel party in Ireland, who still (it seems) form an associated body. This offer was deliberated upon in Dublin, and rejected, in consequence of the strong expectations entertained (perhaps reluctantly by those traitors) that government would conciliate the Catholics by a speedy adjustment of their claims. 1805. Æt. 27.

Give my kind compliments to Mrs. Murray and your sister, and believe me

Yours affectionately,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER LVIII. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, 6th April, 1805.

I have just received your letter, for the fulness of which, upon a subject which interests me beyond any thing, I return you many thanks.* I have received likewise the printed minute of the Senatus Academicus, and have read it with great satisfaction; but I am all impatience for the protest, and your anecdote about Copland increases it to fever. It would certainly be indiscreet to send the minute to an opposition newspaper; nor should I have thought of sending it to any of them. From the terms of your letter, I rather collect a wish that it should be sent to

* The case of Mr. Leslie.

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a ministerial paper, by way of preventing its first appearance in the other. I shall take this into consideration. The present moment, however, is not fit for it; as the Tenth Report* absorbs all interest and conversation.

I am glad to hear that a narrative is likely to be made out of these strange and disgraceful proceedings.† I had just suggested this to Mr. Stewart in a letter I have been writing to him this morning. So far from having any objection to do the thing, I should be proud of it; but it appears to me that it would be executed with more fidelity and vigour, by a person who has witnessed the whole transaction upon the spot. Have you not thought of Jeffrey? I am clear it should be done. On first mentioning the story to Whishaw, it immediately struck him that its circumstances should be made publicly known, in some shape or other. I shall write to Dr. Parr to-day, and try to get his metaphysical erudition as well as his zeal for toleration, to contribute something for us in the way you mention. You must not suffer Moncrieff to forget the report of the debate in the Presbytery.

I have been *scheming* our autumn travels; and have a very fine scheme indeed to propose—that we should traverse the whole of what is emphatically called the Garden of England, setting out from Birmingham and coming round to Gloucester, through all the beautiful scenes of Shropshire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, and Gloucestershire. Such a tour would take us about three weeks.

Ever yours most truly,

FRA. HORNER.

* Of the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry, involving the charges of corruption against Lord Melville. — ED.

† Against Mr. Leslie. — ED.

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LETTER LIX. TO SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH, BOMBAY.

Dear Sir James, Temple, 8th April, 1805.

I shall not now write about politics to you, as the newspapers sent out by the same conveyance which carries this will give you every information up to the latest date. But by the next overland despatch, I shall give you some abstract of the most interesting events or changes; and that, I fancy, is the best opportunity of sending you this sort of intelligence, both because it reaches you in less time, and because it cannot bring you the originals. For the present, I shall only tell you, that the impression produced on the public mind by the Tenth Report is such as has seldom been witnessed, and such as I was very far from expecting on the present occasion. You don't meet with a single person in any company whatever, who pretends to deny, or will suffer you to doubt, that Lord Melville has participated in the peculations of his subordinate. The cry is loud against placemen and Scotsmen. The most habitual zealots for Mr. Pitt are most decided in their indignation against Dundas; this, indeed, is natural, and very reasonable. The impression is deepest, where it is most important that it should be, in the city; where the direct evidence of the report is aided by many feelings and motives which you can easily imagine: "By G—, sir," says Alderman Curtis, "we felt him in our market!" There can be little doubt that all this will have an immediate effect in shattering the administration, already so frail.

An occurrence at the theatre last week is much talked of. In the "Wheel of Fortune," the old Governor says he cannot give his daughter a portion, for he had never understood the arts of governing;

1805. Æt. 27. this play was performed at Covent Garden, and this sentence was received with so much noise, that the players were interrupted for some minutes. Within three days, the King ordered the same play at the other house; and the uproar was infinitely greater. His Majesty is said to have appeared disconcerted: and the sagacious politicians opine, that he had ordered this play so soon after, with the idea that his presence would suppress any such emotion. The historical effect of the Tenth Report, since Pitt is to defend Melville, is more certain, and perhaps more valuable; the men and the principles, that were vilified for so many years by those statesmen, will be seen in a different light, now that their antagonists are cast into the shade by the disclosure of such vulgar and miserable embezzlements.

Brougham returned from the Continent just as this story was made public, and the feeling it raised in his mind was very natural; he had had to defend the statesmen of this country in general, against the contempt with which they are spoken of upon the continent, for their ignorance of foreign affairs, their ill success, want of diplomatic system, &c.; the single topic he always found himself driven to, in contrast with their continental colleagues, was the unsuspected purity of our financiers: it was rather provoking, just on being landed at home, to find that no more was to be said on that head. All Englishmen have the same feeling; and it may produce wonders to-night in the House of Commons: I shall not send this letter to the India House till to-morrow, that I may give you some account of the division.

You will believe that I was very much interested by the details you have sent us about the famine in the Maratta Country. I sent an account of it to Stewart,

not forgetting the anecdote of Colonel Close's maximum.* Can any thing show more strongly the importance of giving the elements of liberal opinion, or, if you will, the dogmas of the right school, to men who have such trusts?

I am glad to hear of your intention to survey statistically the island of Bombay; the *Archives Statistiques* shall be sent out to you certainly by these ships. As to general queries, it would be idle to make out any such; and to frame such particular ones as would be pertinent, requires that some local information should be already possessed, which I can hardly say is my case, with respect to the political economy of Bombay. Yet I have a strong curiosity about it, and, if I were taught a little, might make out questions to learn more. As the emporium of a very extensive and peculiar commerce, it must suggest many illustrations and many corrections of the theories which have been framed in this part of the world, from our own limited experience; with respect to the distribution of capital, the facilities of credit, and the contrivances for accelerating and economizing exchange. The theory of prices, and their variations, is the darkest part of our system; much light might be thrown on it, by considering the subject in various parts of the world, where the habits of consumption, and the medium of circulation, are different.

* "The main causes of this tremendous famine, so far surpassing all European ideas of public distress, are the failure of the rains for two successive seasons, and the civil wars which have distracted the Maratta empire for eight years. Something may have been contributed by our campaign of last year, but certainly much the least part. In the midst of these obvious causes, and of this wide desolation, so obstinate are men's prejudices on this subject, that Colonel Close, our resident, very seriously ascribes much of the evils to the avarice of the corn-dealers at Poonah. He prevailed upon the Péshwa to compel them to sell their grain at what he thought a reasonable price: they ran away, and there was no grain in the market next day." (Extract from a Letter of Sir James Mackintosh to the Rev. Sydney Smith, 14th August, 1804.)

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You would confer a high favour on me, by communicating such views on these parts of the general theory, as the peculiar facts to be observed in Bombay suggest: any books or papers, containing accurate details, I should look upon as invaluable.

The trade of bullion connects all the parts of the world into one system; and there are some recent phenomena in the commerce of this quarter, which would probably be explained if we understood the state of the bullion market in Asia. Have you any means of ascertaining the variations of prices at Bombay, from one point of time to another? If there are, you may aid us much in solving this problem, how far the extraordinary rise of prices all over Europe, within the last twenty years, is to be ascribed to a change in the supply of the precious metals. Has there been a similar depreciation in India? Has it been felt in a general enhancement of commodities; in the collection, for example, of the revenue from the zemindars, with whom Lord Cornwallis compounded for a money rent? The Ayeen Akbery contains some very full and curious lists of prices; a comparative set of modern tables would render both prolific of general results. I wish you would set Erskine and other persons to collect materials for a political description of the Marattas; the documents printed with regard to the late war gleam out enough, to excite one's curiosity in the highest degree, about a people whose political situation is so interesting, both in its singularities and in its analogies, to what has been seen elsewhere. All the books I have been able to get here are equally scanty, and, in the little information they give, inconsistent. The best thing I have met with is Major Malcolm's account of the southern Jaghirdars, in a letter to Lord Clive, from the camp at

Meritch two years ago. It is the sketch of a feudal system. 1805. Æt. 27.

*April 9th.* — The vote of last night is the most unexpected event that we have had for a long time, 216 against 216, and the Speaker's casting voice gave the majority to Opposition: resolving, that Lord Melville, in conniving at Trotter's abuse of the public money, has been guilty of a gross violation of law. But this event will be known to you long before you receive my letter, and the newspapers will give you all the circumstances with which it has been attended. I shall take care, however, to send you some account of them overland.

I have directed two pamphlets to be sent out, on the Education of the Poor, by Joseph Lancaster, a Quaker who keeps a large free school in St. George's Fields; the novelty and success of which has been very much a subject of attention here. I have likewise sent with them, an account published here of a similar institution formerly established at Madras, but which, I understand, has been allowed to decline. By my sending these together, you will understand what I wish you would put into somebody's head at Bombay. While you are in Asia, you must comfort those whom you have left to regret your absence, with the knowledge that you are sowing the seeds of all the blessings that we possess in this part of Europe. Your quarterly charges, your daily conversations, and your actual institutions, will strike an impression which no future negligence can wholly efface, and which moderate care may extend. We have hopes, some of us, that Lancaster's school may be the germ of establishments for a national education both in England and Ireland; he has got about 3000 copies subscribed for, of a new and enlarged edition of his

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book (I have put down both your name and Mr. Stewart's), and Foster has proposed to take him over with him to Ireland this summer, in order to introduce his methods there. You will find a good deal of novelty and ingenuity in all his plans for teaching the common elements; a great saving of direct expense, of time too, and, what is more important than all, perhaps, a great saving to the children of that languor and formal inactivity, which are inseparable from the present method of teaching. I was very much pleased the other day in going to this school, to find that Mr. Hastings had just been there, and had explained to the elder boys (the monitors) a practice which he recollected among the natives in India, of teaching arithmetic by head, without the use of any notation; and the boys were already teaching it in their classes, with success. I have already suggested to Lancaster, that he should procure a circulation of his book in America; he has likewise met with a person, who undertakes to translate it into German; and we shall give it the run of all our readers in the Edinburgh Review, from which it will get into the *Bibliothèque Britannique*. There may not be novelty enough in the book to deserve all this; but there is importance enough in the subject to make a very little novelty a sanctified pretext for over-praising any book that relates to it. The interest already excited in London, and some parts of the country, by this Quaker's school, is a sufficient indication, that some of the wounds inflicted on the English mind, by the terrors of French principles, are already sloughing off.

I shall write to Lady M. by the same ships, and very soon again to yourself. For the present you must be heartily tired of me. Give my affectionate

remembrances to Erskine, and believe me most faithfully and affectionately yours, 1805. Æt. 27.

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER LX. TO LADY MACKINTOSH, BOMBAY.

My dear Lady Mackintosh, Temple, 18th April, 1805.

I owe you many thanks for your kind letter; the messages to Miss Sloper; &c., I delivered without any delay.

You ask me what progress I make in London. When I think of that subject, I never cease to regret what I personally lost by your leaving it; both in immediate enjoyment and in permanent improvement. I have found no new acquaintances who can give me the society and conversation I found in your house; nor have I any hopes of enjoying any thing of the same sort again, until you return among us. I shall all my life remain a worse metaphysician, and more vulgarly a lawyer, by losing Sir James's tuition, and the stimulus with which he excited to great undertakings and good hopes every one's mind that approached him. But I must not fatigue you with these unavailing regrets about myself. I have had a few opportunities this winter of seeing a little of some parts of London society, which I knew nothing of before: and indeed I am often reminded by my solitary books, when I come home, that it is necessary to resist the pleasure of seeing as much as one may. I find this now the only difficulty; from which you may infer, that I have been more idle than becomes a poor Templar, and have reason, on the other hand, to think myself very fortunate in acquiring so early

1805. Æt. 27. as much of London society as I am entitled to partake of. My best hours still are where I have often met you; especially in Doughty Street.* Sharp I respect and love more every day; he has every day new talents and new virtues to show. I take every opportunity that your sister and the Wedgwoods afford us, of seeing them in town.

This morning I returned from a visit to our poet Campbell. He has fixed himself in a small house upon Sydenham Common, where he labours hard, and is perfectly happy with his wife and child. I have seldom seen so strong an argument, from experiment, in favour of matrimony, as the change it has operated on the general tone of his temper and manners. The last little thing he has written is a sea ballad, on Nelson's fight at Copenhagen, most parts of which are very successful. I shall inclose a copy of it for you. In the course of three months, he will publish a little volume of such poems as he has written since the last; chiefly ballads and odes.

Till Lord Melville came to our relief, we have all this winter had but two topics of conversation, young Roscius, and the Lectures of the Right Reverend our Bishop of Mickleham.† His Lordship's success has been beyond all possible conjecture; from six to eight hundred hearers; not a seat to be found, even if you go half an hour before the time. Nobody else, to be sure, could have executed such an undertaking with the least chance of this sort of success; for who else could make such a mixture of odd paradox, quaint fun, manly sense, liberal opinion, striking

* The house of the Rev. Sydney Smith.

† The Rev. Sydney Smith's lectures on Moral Philosophy, at the Royal Institution. — Ed.

language? You must have had more than enough of the other great delighter of the public; the Roscius. As it is the propensity of all superior minds to admire, I am sorry that this occasion has added another to my own proofs that I must place myself on a very low form. There never was such a rage, except that for Sydney. 1805. Æt. 27.

You gratify me very much by the terms in which you speak of my friend Erskine. His great worth, and the strength as well as fineness of his understanding, have long ago placed him very high in the esteem of a great many friends. I owe great obligations to him; he was one of a set of men, somewhat older than myself, at college, who gave me such advantages of education as I could not otherwise have commanded. Farewell, my dear Lady Mackintosh, I hope you will not forget me; though you have too many others to remember to think much of me.

I am, most sincerely yours,
FRA. HORNER.

LETTER LXI. TO SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

Dear Sir James, London, 19th April, 1805.

I have written to you by these ships what you will probably think a very long letter; I sent it to the India House.

We are still full of that extraordinary event, Lord Melville's disgrace; but the persons going out in the ships will tell you all about it. There is a determined resolution to prosecute these inquiries still further. Nor will it surprise any body, if the projected investigation of army expenditure shall open still more igno-

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minious histories of abuse, than the navy commissioners have given us.

Lord Henry Petty has gained immense reputation by his speech on the 8th instant. I have heard several persons say, that Fox's compliment was seriously deserved, when he called it the best speech that was made that night. Lord Henry is moving very steadily on to a high station, both in the public opinion, and in office. His discretion, his good sense, his pains in acquiring knowledge, and the improvement of his power as well as taste in speaking, make such a prophecy with respect to his future destiny very safe.

The saints were very useful on the late occasion, and their conduct, no doubt, is entitled to approbation. Wilberforce's speech produced a great effect. So little was the result expected, that at two o'clock that morning Lord Melville was in high spirits, having just received a note from the House of Commons, saying, that there was no doubt of a large majority in his favour.

There is much reason to fear that these Easter holidays will give an opportunity to the Court of practising some means to rise above their late defeat. A very great person is reported to have addressed a letter to the culprit, regretting that through *inadvertence* he had lost his office, but expressing a hope that he might still live to be of service to his country.

I shall write by the next dispatch, and am ever,

Dear Mackintosh,

Faithfully yours,

Fra. Horner.

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Æt. 27.

LETTER LXII. TO LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.

My dear Seymour, Temple, 9th July, 1805.

When you spoke of returning to London before the end of June, I did not suffer myself to expect it, nor have I indulged myself with any defined time for that agreeable event. There is but this one occasion on which you are not a man of your word; but former experience has taught me to interpret such promises of yours with great latitude. Some time or other, however, before the end of July, I trust you will make your appearance here; else I shall lose you for a whole year.

I have been going on very much as you left me, meeting with new people every now and then, and drawing myself closer towards the old. I reckon that about one in ten is worth seeing a second time, and about one in fifty worth adding to the permanent list. I cling to Smith* and Whishaw, and Ward†, and Mrs. Spencer‡, with a very short list of &c. I have had frequent opportunities of seeing Lord Holland, and am delighted with his spirited understanding, and the sweetness of his dispositions. In both respects, he resembles his sister very much; and both of them are of their uncle's make. The strongest features of the Fox head are, precision, vigilance, and (if I may apply such a word to the understanding) honesty: nobody escapes from them in vague showy generals, or imposes by ostentatious paradox; you are sure of getting both fair play and your due: but you must give as much, or you have neither chance of concealment nor mercy.

* The Rev. Sydney Smith.
† The Hon. J. W. Ward.
‡ The Hon. Mrs. William Spencer.

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Watchful, dexterous, even-handed, implacable sense is their law. I have shrunk from it often with shame; and this I have felt as often in conversation with Miss Fox as with any of them.

I passed a most agreeable day in Grafton Street, with Lady Susan and Lord Fincastle, in addition to your other friends there. Except that time, I have scarcely seen the former since you went to Devonshire. If you return before they go to Tunbridge, I hope we shall contrive to see them sometimes together. This is another argument for hastening your arrival; to which I will even add another, that Petty goes very shortly after the prorogation of Parliament to Ireland, which he intends, after visiting his own estates, to explore politically with Dumont; a most suitable and judicious object of inquiry to any one, who is to belong to the next generation of English statesmen; and the fairest and widest field for undertakings, of which the success would be almost certain if it were only wished for, and which would bestow the most genuine and lasting fame on the statesman who resolves to accomplish them: "*Sed in longum tamen ævum!*" I shall direct this to Berry House, as you desired me, and beg you will present my most respectful regards to your brother and to the Duchess.

I am ever, most truly yours,

FRA. HORNER.

### LETTER LXIII. TO HENRY HALLAM, ESQ.

Dear Hallam, 2d August, 1805.

I have this morning had the pleasure to read your article in the Critical Review; with which I am

sure all those who heard of Leslie's affair, and are friendly to toleration, will be highly gratified. You have stated it in the just point of view, and with great force and dignity. It will give Mr. Stewart much satisfaction, to find his services, in a cause very disagreeable to himself, but most necessary to be undertaken by him, appreciated with correctness and warmly applauded by the independent scholars of England. And the expression of their opinion, delivered so seasonably and in so impressive a manner, will assist in securing the good effects of that victory, which, as you have observed, was but very doubtfully won. 1805. Æt. 27.

I have been reading, in a desultory way, Knight's book on Taste; and am most agreeably surprised with the variety of pleasant instruction it conveys. I had expected no such thing. I have not yet looked very narrowly into its philosophy; but the practical remarks on books, buildings, and manners, appear to me very spirited and just, and though now and then tinctured with an ambition of newness, remarkably free from the narrow uniformity of any system or school. The style too, though a little careless, sometimes more than a little vulgar, has the great charm to me of being a spoken style, and quite refreshing after the solemn, languid, tight-laced form in which every book is now written. Knight to be sure has little grace, but much animation. In his philosophy, I fancy he is upon the right track at least; though I scarcely believe it ever answers any good purpose, to treat with so much levity and even petulance the errors of a man like Burke, or of one who has written so excellent a book as Price. In this respect, he may have borrowed too much from the tone of conversation. When I have leisure to read the work regu-

1805. Æt. 27. larly, I mean to look very closely, whether he is himself quite consistent and sufficiently comprehensive in the doctrine of associations, which I rather suspect is not the case with him, nor in his view of the phenomena of sympathy. In the last doctrine, at least, I have as yet met with very few who are aware of all that has been done for them by Adam Smith, whose work, however imperfect as a theory of moral sentiments, always seemed to me the most scientific and acute description we have yet received in any branch of what may be called the Natural History of the Mind. This analysis, I am persuaded, contains in it the means of explaining many of our difficulties both in criticism and morals. Forgive me, my dear Hallam, for being so very Scotch through my whole letter; but with you, I forget these distinctions now, and look on you as one of *us*, except that you possess besides what we alas! have not. I shall inclose this to Elmsley to direct for me, as I do not know your address. I hope to hear from you, and that you believe me

Most truly yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER LXIV. FROM HENRY HALLAM, ESQ.

Dear Horner, West Bromwich, August 9th, 1805.

I am much flattered by the approbation which you express of my critique on Mr. Stewart's pamphlet. From the time that I was fully acquainted with the case, I considered it as one of public import, and shall be happy if I have succeeded in conveying that impression to the minds of those, who would take little interest in any local politics of your metropolis.

For this reason, as well as for the sake of brevity, I entirely omitted all notice of the secret motives, which indisputably actuated Mr. Leslie's opponents, though by so doing I probably made the circumstances less intelligible to English readers than they would otherwise have been. 1805. Æt. 27.

I thank you for your remarks on Knight's book, to which I shall pay attention when I come to put my own thoughts together on the subject. I have read him, as you have, in a desultory manner, and concur pretty much in your opinion. Perhaps I should rate the merits of his style rather lower, and the faults rather higher than you appear to do. It is certainly, as you say, *a spoken style;* but hardly neat or correct enough for good conversation: and I doubt whether the tone of common conversation, even among quick and intelligent men, can well be borne in a serious work in any language except the French. The style of that people in ordinary speech is much more correct, pointed, and lively than our own; and as their language does not admit of any rythmical cadence, nor of so much force and majesty as most others, their best writers make use of a style which may truly be called, *spoken.* There is another objection, besides carelessness and laxity, to Knight's manner of writing. He is perpetually leaving his subject, as all men will do, who follow the course of their ideas without the discipline of method and arrangement; so that I have never seen a book of which the general scope was so difficult to catch. The particular remarks seem, however, for the most part very good, and I have no doubt of being able conscientiously to give him a good character. I hope you liked Herbert's*

* The present Dean of Manchester.

1805. articles in No. 12. They seem to me admirably
Æt. 27. written, to say nothing of their substance, which I could wish to have been more weighty than sonnets and accents. Do you not like Scott's detection of the Caledonian imposture? We shall now hear no more of Ossian than of Vortigern.

Yours most truly,
H. Hallam.

### Letter LXV. TO THOMAS THOMSON, ESQ.

My dear Thomson, Hampstead, 8th August, 1805.

I stood very much in need of your letter, to console me under my disappointment at not seeing you here in person. I have not extracted from Murray a very distinct explanation of this change in your plans; though he does say something of your increasing business, which I shall put up with for a good reason, till you give me a better. Will you allow me to dream so pleasantly as to think still of having you in London about the same time you were last year? a period I often look back to with much satisfaction, we saw each other so well, and idled away a fortnight so profitably. I mean at length to commit myself to a special pleader or draughtsman; but can promise, with a safe conscience (I think) to be very idle with you, if you will but come and try me.

I don't know what to say to your account of Mr. Stewart's plan of his book.* I should like to

* "You will rejoice to hear that Mr. Stewart is going on busily with his continuation of the 'Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind.' He is living about eight miles from Edinburgh, on the banks of the water of Leith, where I lately spent two days with him, and had the pleasure of hearing him read several chapters of his work. His present plan extends to two additional volumes, of which, however, only one half of the first will be occupied with the harder parts of metaphysics, the remainder being given to a series of dissertations on taste, and various

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have *all* his metaphysics, and I should like to have all his literature, and I should like to see him pay both these debts, that he might proceed forthwith to discharge his farther engagements in political economy. On all of these subjects, his views are original and profound; and their originality consists so much in the comprehensive form which they have assumed in his mode of conceiving them, that it can be preserved only in his expressions. His writing on literary and moral topics is the most popular in this part of the world, but Stewart ought not to write for this part of the world, or for this age of the world; he is bound to feel more courage, possessing the art of writing as he does, which always makes such a conquest over time, to say nothing of that loftiness and sensibility which pervade his philosophy, and must insure its success for ever, if England has any pretensions to immortality. If I could have my own wishes gratified, I confess I should desire that he would make his view of mind, intellectually considered, as enlarged as he has ever considered it, including all his valuable suggestions for the improvement of logic in the various sciences, even though he should not have perseverance

other modifications of intellect, which he considers as *acquired* powers, or habits of the mind. Some of these last he has already written; and they are admirable; but though certainly they will prove the most popular and attractive parts of his work, I cannot help thinking that he is about to sacrifice too much to them, by condensing or rather retrenching the previous part of the system. In particular, many of his speculations for the improvement of logic would thus be almost completely lopped off. Were he to give himself full and free scope, he says that he could easily fill another volume with the metaphysical part alone; and I have been earnestly exhorting him to do so. That it would add infinitely to the real value of the work, I dare say you will agree with me in thinking; and I am very confident that its value would be enhanced even as a marketable commodity. For at least the present century, it will probably come in the place of Locke's Essay as the standard elementary work on this branch of philosophy, and in that view, nothing can more contribute to its currency than an appearance of *completeness*. No part of it will go to the press in less than a year." (Extract from a letter of Mr. Thomson to Mr. Horner, dated the 20th July, 1805.)

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to mould these into a systematic shape; and that then he would proceed immediately to political philosophy, in which I am confident he would produce a work that would excite great attention, and impress a lasting influence. After all the mischief that has been done of late years, I am thoroughly convinced that the public mind, in England at least, is still sound and susceptible.

I am very sorry to see my paper so soon at an end, for I had a thousand things more to say. It is very odd we write so seldom, when I, at least, have so much to write. I suppose you cannot tell the reason, more than I can; and yet I suspect I shall not have the happiness to see your penmanship for another twelvemonth to come. I am determined for *my* part to behave better. We shall see.

Ever truly yours,

FRA. HORNER.

### LETTER LXVI. TO LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.*

Hampstead, 13th Sept., 1805.

Joy! a thousand times! my dear Seymour. I have not had such happiness to congratulate for a long time; and there is not a line in your wild letter, that did not give me the same ecstasy. May you have unclouded health and peace to pursue objects that are so dear to you, and to drink to the bottom those pleasures which your long abstinence makes you more deserving of than ever. Yet I cannot help reflecting, that this winter will separate us more than ever in our labours; when to meet again, at the place we parted, loaded with our separate and very different collections for the great and common purpose! You,

* The letter of Lord Webb Seymour to which this is an answer, I have not found.—ED.

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I know, will move steadily on to your point; while, in the nature of my immediate occupations, and still more, alas! in the irresolution and debility of my own ambition, I see too certainly the trifling interests day by day that will consume away my years, and the habits that will imperceptibly unfit me for generous speculations. I already begin to look back with melancholy and shame on the acquisitions I have lost; and the only favourable symptom I can discover in myself is, that when I do indulge myself a little with philosophy, I fall to it with a devouring appetite. But this too may go with the rest, and abandon me to a false relish, not original to my nature, for the temporary and limited purposes of a London law life. *Nec inutilis toga* perhaps ought to bound my wishes; but I endeavour to fortify and raise myself by the examples of those, (they are few) who in other countries as well as this, but all of them in other times, have successfully combined the duties of the profession with other labours. You must forgive this desponding egotism; your letter brought it all upon my mind, and I have delivered myself of it for a while, by expressing it where I know it will be understood.

I mean to be in Edinburgh for ten days about the middle of October, and to leave London so as to take a good deal of exercise, and see something of Murray, before we reach Scotland, where I shall lose him again in another crowd. We purpose, therefore, to set out in the first week of the month. I am necessarily detained here till then; Sydney Smith comes home upon the 1st, and Murray would like to see him once or twice; so would he you, if you can be here by that time, but that is of less consequence to him, as he will have you all winter. As you must go down

1805. Æt. 28. rapidly, it will not suit us to travel together; for I really want exercise and air, and the sight of true green. But it will be quite practicable, I trust, to have some of our old walks by the frith; and I shall rejoice to stay at Edinburgh a day or two more on purpose. In case you should find a morning so vacant before you come to town, as not to grudge throwing it away in giving me more tour-directions, I may tell you that we propose to go down by Lancashire and Westmoreland, and, if the weather is clear, to lounge away four days at some spot among the lakes, wherever we can find the picturesque and comforts together. Give us a little *carte du pays:* your former instructions are not lost, but carefully laid up in Cary's map for a future season. We have settled it, I think, to enter Lancashire by Chester; and I shall propose to advance there rather circuitously, through Bucks, to Warwick, straight north to the Peak of Derby, and then across Cheshire by Northwich. Can you amend this scheme?

Present my respectful regards to the Duke and the Duchess.

Ever most truly yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER LXVII. TO SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH, BOMBAY.

My dear Sir James, Hampstead, 25th Sept., 1805.

I have this moment observed in the newspaper, that there is a vessel for Bombay; and though I fear it may be too late, I shall take such chance as there is of sending you a letter by this opportunity. I have had the satisfaction, too, of learning from Sharp the interesting contents of your letter to him; and Sydney

Smith, who has just come from the country, promises me another gratification of the same kind; so that I contrive to learn a great deal about you, and imagine to myself, in very lively colours, all the labours and pleasures and public services that occupy you, both at Bombay and at Parell. 1805. Æt. 28.

You will see in the newspapers that we are upon the eve of a frightful contest upon the continent; in which the utmost we can dare to hope seems, that after several years of carnage and waste, we may be left still in existence as a nation. There is a confidence placed in Russia which I never could understand; she has no direct interest affected by France, and may be allured from our coalition in an instant by irresistible bribes. What will *then* be the peril of Austria, even if *her* fate should be protracted so long? We must do this, no doubt, because we cannot do better, and because we are at war; but it is miserable to think of the hazards we have brought upon Europe by this war of bullying fear and folly. Some people entertain an expectation, that the conflict may be averted by a general negotiation; but that could only be reasonably founded upon the proof, that Buonaparte was disposed to give up part of his immense gains to secure the remainder. They who dream of this, seem to have considered neither his character, nor the necessities of his situation.

I have not recently heard of any movements of a party nature. The hints you will find in some of the newspapers, of the King having waived his personal exception of Mr. Fox, are well founded; this was intimated in the course of some ineffective advances that were made, I believe, to the Grenville part of the Opposition. Such advances are understood to have been repeated once or twice since the prorogation of

1805. Æt. 28. Parliament; and attempts of this or another kind will, of course, be tried again before it assembles. A dissolution seems improbable, though it is talked of; Pitt would gain those few burghs which Addington filled with his friends, but, upon the whole, might lose in popular places; Lord Melville's affair, and Pitt's awkward line of conduct with respect to it, have worked so powerfully upon the public mind. Even in Ireland, several contests are talked of, and the weight of Catholic votes will become more apparent; perhaps the fidelity and *unanimity* of Scotland might be shaken likewise, during the uncertainty that hangs over Lord Melville's fate.

We have had few new books of late. Mr. Payne Knight's on Taste has attracted more notice than any other, and you would read it, I am very sure, with avidity; he rambles through such a variety of topics; always trying originality; with entire freedom; and though not without paradox as well as licence, yet, upon many occasions just and acute. I have heard both Mr. Fox and Mr. Windham speak in praise of the book, and with even less qualification of their praise than I should have acquiesced in. He is often wrong, I think, and petulant in the manner of being so; and there seem to me some gross heresies of taste, particularly in regard to Milton. Yet I have certainly derived some profit, in addition to great pleasure, from reading most part of it more than once. Mr. Fox particularly admires the view given of Achilles's character; it is very fine: and I may add that Mr. Windham had announced his admiration of the work, before he came to that passage in which you will find much good sense about boxing. Lord Selkirk's tract on the state of the Highlands and emigrations, excited much attention; it is a valuable piece of descriptive

history, as well as political economy, and though I had long known his accomplished understanding, it has raised my admiration of that, as well as of his exalted and practical benevolence.* We all lament that he did not make the account of his own colony longer. There was a much more perfect concurrence of opinion among our critics upon this book than upon the last I mentioned. I take it for granted, Sharp has sent you both; Stewart's tract on Cause and Effect you had before, it has brought that senseless and unprincipled persecution into more general attention, than it would otherwise have obtained; Brown's tract, which grew out of the same occasion, was sent to Erskine. I have sent to Sharp for you four copies of Lancaster's book on the education of the poor, that you may extend the benefits of his very useful improvements. Some of them were borrowed from India; they are returned with increase. There is nothing else of value in political economy. Roscoe's *great* history has made no name; it is universally considered a dull lifeless mass, in which the warm interests of the finest subject in modern story are obscured by tasteless accumulation, or diluted away in an insipid, colourless style.

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Mr. Stewart has devoted this summer to the continuation of his philosophical work, of which we shall receive two volumes some time next year. One half of the first of these will be occupied with abstract disquisition, and the remainder with a series of dissertations on Taste and the other modifica-

* Mr. Horner wrote at this time a critique on Lord Selkirk's work, entitled "Observations on the present State of the Highlands of Scotland; with a view of the Causes and probable Consequences of Emigration." It was published in the 13th number of the Edinburgh Review, October, 1805. To the same number Mr. Horner contributed the article on Professor Leslie's case, mentioned in the note at p. 288, taking as his text, Mr. Stewart's tract on Cause and Effect.—Ed.

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tions of intellect, which may be regarded as subsidiary powers. The different varieties of philosophical and professional genius will likewise, I believe, occupy much of his speculations. The course indeed he will pursue, you have in his outlines. The only other work that I know of as in hand, from which much may be expected, is by Mr. Allen, who accompanied Lord Holland to Spain; a series of essays on the interior economy and administration of Spain, under the different periods of her history, with a view to illustrate the causes that have kept down the natural resources of the country. I have seen some parts of it, which are full of curious minute information, compressed with excellent judgment, and all selected with an eye to general principles. It will be very instructive and entertaining. I have seen much of Lord Holland since his return, and though prepared by the account I had received from you for an extraordinary man, am infinitely charmed with such a combination of gentleness, ingenuity, and knowledge.

In a letter I wrote several months ago, either to you or to Erskine, I proposed some queries in order to obtain information about the change of prices in India. I wish to arrive at a sort of inductive conclusion, from a comparison of remote facts, respecting the recent variation in the value of the precious metals, all over the world. If you can furnish me details enough, to give a sort of oriental tinge to my illustrations, I will humbly offer you a little essay for your infant society; where I observe that statistics and political economy are to be encouraged. I hope you will infuse your own spirit into the mass which they are to collect for you about Bombay and Salsette; and that you will direct them to include as

much as possible the details of former times as well as the present. A statist does nothing for philosophical economy, unless he ascertains and describes *changes*, and such *relations* among his details as are matter of fact. Insulated particulars, however accurate, like those which the German statists are so fond of heaping together, lead to nothing; and perhaps the most faithful picture of the economy of a country, if it is taken only for a single point of time, may be considered rather as a curiosity for the library of a virtuoso, than the materials of reasoning. A series of such, no doubt, would give the relations and changes that I speak of; but I fear that in undertakings of this sort we cannot reckon upon successors precisely to our own work. I doubt if I have shown myself in this explanation quite as distinct, as I have been presumptuous in obtruding my immature notions upon you. 1805. Æt. 28.

I am going next week to Edinburgh for about a week; and if I gain any news there that I think will amuse you I will write an overland letter.

Believe me ever most faithfully yours,

FRA. HORNER.

JOURNAL, dated *August* and *September*. — "Mr. Windham, speaking of Pitt, described him as being without affectation in the least, much above vanity. He considers him as having suffered greatly by having been introduced too soon to office, and losing the opportunities of seeing men and manners, except as a minister, not the most favourable way (Mr. Windham added) of seeing men: had he only seen them for a little while, as his father did, in the army. In preparing his measures, he thinks more of the House of Commons than of their operation; satisfied if they

1805. Æt. 28. will look well in statement—like those improvers of ground, who will build you a house that shall look most picturesque to spectators on the outside, though within it be incommodious. Mr. Windham instanced the Parish Recruit Bill, and said this was the most satisfactory solution he had been able to give of Pitt's failure in this and many other plans, when Mr. Fox had observed to him, that surely these were occasions on which it was Pitt's interest to summon all his talents. Speaking of his going through military details—military cars, rockets, catamarans, &c., Windham observed, that Pitt's judgment on such matters was generally bad, though he had a great talent in stating them. On another occasion, with Ward and John Ponsonby, when there was a great deal of conversation about the exercises and sports of the common people, the impolicy of suppressing them, &c., and when we ran over the names of the different public men in the state and the law, whose opinions upon such a point of policy might come to be of importance, I hazarded Pitt's name,—"Oh!" exclaimed Windham, "Pitt never was a boy; besides, such questions wo'n't conduce to make a minister."

### Letter LXVIII. FROM LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.

Dear Horner, Oxford, 30th Sept., 1805.

Thus far have I proceeded on my journey to London, and here I halt among friends for three or four days, but I hope to meet you in London on Monday or Tuesday next. Many thanks for your congratulatory letter. The confident hopes you entertain respecting me and my views will always be an additional stimulus in the effort to realise them.

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I too feel a regret that your pursuits and mine must every day carry us wider asunder in our acquisitions, and our habits. Yet it ought to be so. Your desires have prompted you, and your talents adapt you, to an active station; and, while I in retirement am endeavouring to work out the distant good of mankind, you may indulge immediate, as well as remote, views of public utility. The hopes I have formed for myself are never so checked as when I find you desponding about your success in life. The difference of our situations and views, indeed, renders us dependent on very different circumstances. Leave me exempt from the casualties of human life, and I am almost secure of my object. You must be guided by one circumstance, which must be watched for, as it grows out of the future—*opportunity*. In your philosophical love of steady rules of expectation and of conduct, you seem unwilling to bow to the influence of fortune, and anxious to omit it in your calculations. Hence perhaps arises that irresolution of your own ambition of which you complain, and which has always left me in doubt about your pursuits, even when you fancied that your plans were definite. Any remarks that I may make with a view to advice, may only show that I have misconceived the state of your mind; yet it may be of use to know the ideas an intimate friend has formed of your motives and plans. You appear to me to be desirous of the emoluments of your profession, and to distinguish yourself as a philosopher in law, in political economy, and moral science; while your ambition prompts you to aim at a situation, which may allow you to apply your speculative principles in practice. All these objects operate upon your mind, with various degrees of influence, according to the temper of mind, the society, the line of study, &c.

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of any particular period, and according to the hopes afforded by external circumstances of the attainment of this or that, and conscious that such different pursuits must materially interfere with one another, you are thrown into a continual fluctuation of motives, and of plans arising from them. If this view is just, I wish that you could bear more patiently the uncertainty of events that do not depend upon yourself; but, in order to turn contingencies to the best account, you should also define your objects with more precision, and determine the *proportionable* quantum of each that will satisfy you. In my own mind I can easily adjust your difficulties, so as to form a notion of what I would do in your situation, but it would be vain to give precise advice in a case of which I probably know so little. If you think proper to discuss the subject, I shall be very glad to do it in conversation, when I can inquire into facts while I reason.

I shall be in town on Wednesday the 2d; friends have detained me here. On that day I shall dine at Brunet's at six: if you are not engaged, do come and console me for bad wine by philosophy.

Yours ever truly,

WEBB SEYMOUR.

LETTER LXIX. TO LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.

My dear Seymour, Temple, 30th Nov, 1805.

I reached this place on Tuesday morning in very good health, though I had not halted on my journey, even at York. It is a greater exertion than I should be fond of repeating often; but it is not bad, either for the body or the understanding, to try now

and then how much it can do. I have found all our friends here well. 1805. Æt. 28.

I mean to go into a lawyer's office immediately; as soon as Whishaw can determine for me, which it ought to be, a conveyancer's, a special pleader's, or an equity draughtsman's: a good many things must be considered with respect to each. In the meantime, I am reading law, and making very virtuous resolutions: an arrear of business, of a more literary complexion, still hangs upon me; but I shall reduce it, I hope, before another year of wandering fires begins to shine on me.

I have not seen Sharp yet, nor Petty, but I expect to meet them to-day at the "King of Clubs;" so that next time I write to you, I hope to tell you something of the City Institution, and of the motion for thanks to old Clerk.*

By this time, I have no doubt, Henning has put your physiognomy upon paper, if not into wax. You will take care to let me have the best of the drawings he makes of you; and as soon as he will part with it. Your company over the chimney-piece here will assist me in dreaming of the rest; and your countenance will keep me in mind of many valuable discussions, and wholesome advices.

I have much to write to you, or Mrs. Stewart about Poet Campbell; but have no more room left now. His health is pretty well.

Faithfully and affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

* The author of the Essay on Naval Tactics.

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LETTER LXX. TO LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.

My dear Seymour, London, 26th Dec., 1805.

I have read your notes on Lancaster with great delight. You have stated the merits of his plan in the true point of view, and have pointed out some circumstances which I had not sufficiently perceived. I regret very much that I had parted with Lancaster's book before I got this letter of yours, for it would have assisted me so much that I might have accomplished a review of it without sacrificing too much time from my other pursuits. But when I found that, in my slow and fastidious way of proceeding upon such occasions, I could not have it ready for next number, I begged of Hallam, when he left town for the holydays, to take Lancaster with him and send Jeffrey an account of it. I have reserved Mrs. Trimmer, however, for myself, and I shall furnish one or two pages of remarks upon her pamphlet. I was quite aware that this must be done in the tone which you recommend to me: to do it in any other, would only furnish these canting and mischievous fools with a new ingredient for the poison, which they so busily administer whenever there are appearances of life and motion. Mrs. Trimmer is only the very humble tool of a numerous, increasing, opulent, and authoritative class, which has sounded throughout London an alarm against Lancaster.

I find that Alison's book* has just got into Holland House; I believe from Petty happening to mention it. Nobody had heard of it before. General Fitzpatrick,

* Essay on the Principles of Taste.

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who reads a great deal, particularly in that line, has been reading it, and is very highly pleased. He says that all Knight's doctrine is there, better stated, and infinitely better illustrated. Try to tell this, in such a manner, that it may go to Alison. He has never received fame enough for a book which, with many faults, contains many beautiful thoughts and many charms in the writing.

I shall obey you, in not repeating what you very rightly call your aspersions on Opposition, but I will not obey you so far as to bear my wrath in silence towards yourself. Thinking as candidly upon the case as I can, you seem to me substantially unjust. I cannot affect to deny, that there is more of personal party-feeling in their ambition, and more of faction occasionally in their judgment of public occurrences, than a generous and enlightened spectator *wishes* to find. But I do assert, that there is not more of these bad qualities mingled with their other motives to activity, than a fair spectator always *in fact finds* among all political leaders and their partizans. If I should say, that the principal men of the present old opposition are less tainted with the inconsistencies and profligacy of mere place ambition, than either those to whom they are opposed, or any of those to whom England has in general had to look up for the discharge of public business, it is the impression which I have received from looking a little into our history since the Revolution, and considering a little, as they pass, the ministerial scenes of our own time: but I am somewhat of a partizan myself, and, therefore, I need not go so far, for you will say my impression is not a fair one. I only say then, that they are upon an equal footing. Well then. It is all of course, that each

1805. faction should taunt the other with an unprincipled
Æt. 28. love of place, and a total want of public virtue. But it is not the part of an impartial spectator, who cares only for the public interest, to join in this cry with either, unless he has evidence that the other is really the worse of the two. He knows that both have less patriotism and purity than he could wish; but when he knows that the deficiencies of both are pretty much the same, in this respect, he will direct his preference by other points of comparison. There is a certain kind and quantity of work necessary to be executed, with instruments which you cannot perfect and finish to your mind, but must take as you find them. You must take political men as nature gives them; not wholly selfish and unprincipled; but urged by motives that are not purely benevolent, and liable, in a personal contest, to the errors of personal passions. But if all history satisfies you that they have ever been so, and you discover no glorious exception in your own time to this constant experience, you will then compare the men that are opposed to each other, not by their own pretences to purity, or by their libels against one another, but by the talents which they have respectively proved themselves to possess, and by the judgment which you can exercise for yourself upon their opposite plans and proposals of public policy. Do not, therefore, say with the vulgar partizans of Huskisson, that Opposition build their prospect of place and power on the ruins of Europe; it is not true; and if it were, it is very little to the purpose. Is it merely for the love of mankind and Europe, that our Chancellor of the Exchequer takes all the trouble of that office? Do not permit me if I ever say with the other vulgar partizans, that Pitt cares for nothing but place; for

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that is not true, and would not be much to the purpose of any conclusive comparison of men, if we were both to believe it. I could name to you gentlemen, with good coats on, and good sense in their own affairs, who believe that Fox *did* actually send information to the enemy in America, and *is* actually in the pay of France. These stupid atrocities of faction are the disgrace of all ages: they circulate only among the illiterate and base-minded; but they are not a very much over-charged caricature of the mistakes which are committed by minds of a higher order.

I must here cut my pamphlet short, before I have got half through it; that is, before I have made the practical application, as the preachers say. For I meant to have proceeded to the comparison in point of talents and proposed plans of policy, and at least to have shown the reasons of the preference which I give. But I dare say you are tired of me. I shall write to you about Campbell in a day or two. Remember me to all my friends; particularly at Callender House*, where I should be mortified to be forgotten. You are a great favourite of the Riddells, I find, which makes me jealous to despair; it will be very generous in you to praise your rival in his absence. But I fear you cannot help taking the most ungenerous advantages.

Yours ever,

FRA. HORNER.

JOURNAL. "*January 9th.*—Mr. Fox was of opinion, before the commencement of the present war, that the real intentions and wishes of Bonaparte, however hostile he was to this country, were to make his sub-

* The residence in Edinburgh of Mr. Dugald Stewart.

1806. Æt. 28. jects a commercial people; to keep his own power, of course, as absolute as possible; but to reduce the military spirit and system to which he originally owed it. It is needless to say what ought to have been the policy of this country, upon such a supposition.

I heard Mr. Fox yesterday, speaking of Burke, say that the coincidence was quite surprising between the arguments, declamations, and even the very expressions, of Salmasius against Milton, and Burke's upon the Revolution. He did not say Burke had taken from Salmasius; but he disclaimed making the charge as if he thought it might be made with considerable probability. Dryden's prose, he said, was Burke's great favourite. He seems to copy him more than he does any other writer."

## Letter LXXI. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

Gallery of House of Commons, 21st Jan. 1806.

"My dear Murray,

We are all here in a corner together—your brother, Brougham, Loch, Frederick*, and Dumont; waiting with much patience for what the day may bring forth, but without a certain expectation of being repaid for our trouble. The amendment is to be moved here by Petty, and in the other House by Lord Cowper: the Chronicle is correct in this. It is possible that the speech may be of such an aspect as to render an amendment unnecessary or impolitic; though I hardly imagine that will be the case. For the speech must either omit all allusion to continental

* The present Lieutenant-General Sir Frederick Adam.

affairs, or speak of them in a style very different from what ought to satisfy those who have no confidence in the present ministers: in both cases, an amendment is the proper course; and though the answer will probably be, that you ought to wait till the treaties and papers are laid before the House, yet there are sufficient grounds for an amendment in the objections that were formerly stated, against entering into *any* treaties of subsidy. There is another event, which may turn off the debate; the announced dissolution of the ministry, which is not altogether out of the question, since the increased illness of Pitt. This is the point which at present occupies every one's feelings and attention; for no one, even with all his party antipathies, or with all his resentment for the mischiefs which have been brought upon the country, can be insensible to the death of so eminent a man. In the place where I am sitting now, I feel this more than seems quite reasonable to myself; I cannot forget how this space has been filled with his magnificent and glowing declamations, or reflect with composure that that fine instrument of sound is probably extinguished for ever. You observe I speak as if he were already dead.

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The physicians at first suspected that his disease was "*schirrus pylori*," but they are of opinion now that it is not so. A stomach completely destroyed by his habits of living and labour, and at the last, I suppose, by painful anxiety and mortification of mind, has reduced him to extreme emaciation and debility. He had been able to take no sustenance for some time but egg and brandy; on Saturday he was rather better, and ate some chicken broth; but in the evening he became worse than ever. Wilberforce had gone to Putney in the morning, but could not see him: he

1806. Æt. 28. had a conversation with the Bishop of Lincoln who attends him constantly, and of course knows his constitution better than any body. He said to Wilberforce that he looked upon it as a *breaking-up;* this Wilberforce told to Stephens, who repeated it to Brougham. He continued very ill all Sunday; yesterday morning, Lord Chatham was sent for very suddenly. In the evening, I met young Rose, who told us of a letter his father had had from Sir Walter Farquhar, dated 7 o'clock in the evening; he said "his hopes were not so good," but "he did not quite despair." This was the first time Farquhar had acknowledged there was danger; Baillie, and still more Reynolds, as you must have heard, pronounced it from the first a very bad case. I have heard, since I came into the gallery, that there are accounts this morning of his being still alive. And we must have heard, if it had been all over, for Billy Baldwin, the chronicle of the day, is writing his name at this moment for his seat.

If this event should take place, it must be followed by some very considerable effects on the state of our domestic politics. A numerous tribe of inefficient retainers, who have usurped important stations, will be swept off the field for ever; perhaps to be supplanted in time by another set of the same. But the very change is wholesome, and there is an interval always of something like qualification for offices, and deference to public opinion. There will be a new casting of parts among some of our state adventurers. And the removal of the old personalities, which have perhaps on both sides attached our speakers too pertinaciously to their respective systems, may render it more easy to enter upon that new system which seems necessary in this new position of our affairs.

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I sent off a cargo of books for the Advocates' Library, ten days ago, and am making up another, in which I shall include some modern book on usury.

Ever yours most truly,

FRA. HORNER.

JOURNAL. "*January* 22*d.*—I imagine that the illness of Pitt, and the belief that his life was despaired of, was not the only reason of postponing the Amendment last night, though it would have been a sufficient one. It had been understood for some time that the Addingtonians were to "co-operate with the Opposition," according to their own phrase in what I believe was almost a communication from them. In the course of Monday, however, they sent notice that they could not support the Amendment: this must have been late on Monday, for at three o'clock that day Lord Cowper had no idea that the Amendment would not be moved. In consequence of this defection, it was probably deemed prudent not to push a division, especially as there was so good a reason for postponing the discussion for a few days. This sudden turn of the Addingtonians can only be explained, since the Amendment is so moderate, if not tame, by the report which we have had for some days, that the King wishes to make Sidmouth his minister, since he is deprived of Pitt; and either from an understanding with the Court, already, or not to injure their chance by any thing offensive, they have agreed to relinquish the hostility they had resolved on. A few days will explain this; I shall not be surprised, in the least, if we have again the Doctor, Castlereagh, Hawkesbury, &c. I shall be surprised indeed, if, at such a crisis of peril, the country submits to it; but Whishaw says, "the brute power of Government will do any thing."

1806. Æt. 28. Tierney is said to be very angry at this conduct of the Addingtonians, which of course means that the Prince is; certainly last Wednesday he was all for an Amendment.

"Since writing the above, I have inquired into the fact more particularly. Lord Cowper told me that the Addingtonians did give notice, that they would not vote for the Amendment; but that this had no effect in postponing it. A few hours before going down to Westminster there was a meeting at Mr. Fox's house of a few of the principal persons of Opposition; Cowper was there; Fox stated to them that he thought it impossible they could enter into the discussion; he could not, while they had the idea that Pitt was in extremities;—"*mentem mortalia tangunt*," he said. Cowper described him as appearing to feel very sensibly the calamity of his distinguished rival; and he described it by saying, that Fox appeared to feel more than Lord Grenville, who was present also.

"*January* 23*d*.—Mr. Pitt died this morning."

## Letter LXXII. TO MR. DUGALD STEWART.

My dear Sir, The Temple, 23d Jan. 1806.

Allen wrote to you yesterday, to inform you that Petty has begun a canvass for the University of Cambridge, in consequence of that very unexpected event, which, though not yet announced, is considered as certain. Lord Spencer's son, Lord Althorp, is his opponent, and he set out last night for Cambridge; Petty thinks it more proper to wait till the death of Mr. Pitt is declared, and it fortunately happens that the Cambridge address is to be presented to-day, and

has brought the Vice-Chancellor and several of the Heads of Houses to town; Petty will go to St. James's, and set out probably immediately after. 1806. Æt. 28.

Lord Althorp is a Johnian*, and that college has always been formidable in elections, from the great number of graduates who belong to it, and who have always been more thoroughly disciplined to act together upon University contests, than those of Trinity. We have great reason to expect success; Lord Henry himself is very sanguine. It is on every account a most desirable object for him."

Since I wrote the above, I have been down to Westminster Hall. Pitt expired this morning at eight o'clock.

If I hear any thing worth telling you about the ministerial arrangements, that does not find its way into the newspapers, I will write to you again.

My anxiety about Petty's election is now much less than when I wrote the first part of this letter. He has had a letter from the Chief Justice, flattering in the highest degree. Turncoats are volunteering to him; and a great many of the base worshippers of sunshine have, even since eight o'clock, turned their faces towards him. The very courtiers are showing such symptoms of kindness, as if they believed it possible to play over again the game of 1784, and set up a young one against the House of Commons and the public. They mistake their man; for if Petty has any good quality, on which I rely, it is a firm attachment to Fox and his maxims of government: any other conduct, to be sure, in the present circumstances, would be folly; but he has had praise enough to turn his head, if it were not a steady one. He has inform-

* This was a mistake; Lord Althorp was of Trinity, and Mr. Allen, the present Bishop of Ely, was his tutor. — Ed.

1806. ÆT. 28. ation, diligence, and sense, that will make him an eminent statesman, if he preserves unimpaired his political consistency and probity. In this respect, I have the most sanguine expectations of him; notwithstanding the great disadvantages he may incur, if he is brought early into considerable power. I talk of him as if he were already a minister; almost all the world talk of him as on the high road to it, and Mr. Fox regards him as his successor in the only station *he* has ever held, or may perhaps ever hold. I meant to have made this wholly a letter of news and business, but have insensibly got into another strain. I should hardly write with so little reserve about our friend Lord Henry to any other person, and at present he is in every body's mouth.

I shall keep part of this paper open for any news that I may pick up before dinner. In the mean time, let me second Allen's request that if any thing can be done at Edinburgh to aid the canvass, you will not consider it so secure as to entitle us to neglect any portion of interest. Murray will consult you about the best means of exerting it, in the case of Cambridge graduates who have formerly been at Edinburgh, or of students who may be there now.

Give my best regards to Mrs. Stewart, and believe me,

Faithfully and affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

JOURNAL. "26*th January.* One story last night was, that Lord Hawkesbury had, with the approbation of the rest of the cabinet, accepted the office of First Lord of the Treasury the evening before, together with the Cinque Ports; but that after considering it, they took fright, and when the king came to town,

told him they could not venture to go on: that the king was very much incensed at this want of courage, and said, he would go out to Windsor till Monday, and arrange it otherwise for himself. 1806. ÆT. 28.

" The other story was, that Hawkesbury had not accepted, but that he was entrusted by the king to make the new arrangements. This I heard Nicholas Vansittart say, rather with a sneer at Lord Hawkesbury, for he observed that a place in the Treasury might be had more easily than one where we were then standing—in the pit of the opera.

" What is certain is, that Lord Grenville received a message this morning from the king, desiring to see him to-morrow at twelve o'clock. The message was brought by Lord Dartmouth; Lord Grenville gave notice of it immediately to Mr. Fox. After the Speaker's dinner this evening, Mr. Fox went to Lord Grenville's.

" *January 29th.*—At the interview which Lord Grenville had on Monday last, the 27th, with the king; his Majesty, after customary compliments, said he had sent for his Lordship, to have his advice in forming a new administration. Lord Grenville answered, that his sentiments on that subject were already well known, and that the new ministry ought to be comprehensive, &c. The king then desired that Grenville should, without delay, proceed to draw up such an arrangement as he and his friends might agree upon. Grenville said, it was his duty to mention to his majesty, that the person with whom he should consult upon this occasion was Mr. Fox. The king replied, " he expected it to be so, and he meant it so;" then the conversation, in substance, ended, and the king went into another room: as he was

1806. Æt. 28. going out he said, 'You will be happy, my Lord, to hear that our troops will come safe home.'

"This account I received from ——, who had it of course from immediate authority; and it seemed to be intended that it should be generally known, because some inaccurate reports of it were abroad.

"In the interval between Pitt's death and the message to Lord Grenville, that is, between Thursday and Sunday, an offer was certainly made to Lord Wellesley, from the remainder of the ministry, and, of course, with the king's approbation, to take the lead of administration. He declined it immediately, and distinctly. This was made known to the Prince, I presume, by Lord Wellesley himself, who has courted his Royal Highness since his arrival very assiduously, and with success; the Prince mentioned it to Mr. Fox as an instance of great generosity in Wellesley. Mr. Fox probably viewed it as belonging rather to the virtue of prudence and address. This was mentioned to me by ——.

Sheridan is very little consulted at present; and it is said, will not have a seat in the cabinet. This is a distressing necessity. His habits of daily intoxication are probably considered as unfitting him for trust. The little that has been confided to him he has been running about to tell; and since Monday, he has been visiting Sidmouth. At a dinner at Lord Cowper's on Sunday last, where the Prince was, he got drunk as usual, and began to speak slightingly of Fox. From what grudge this behaviour proceeds I have not learned. The whole fact is one to investigate with candour, and with a full remembrance of Sheridan's great services, in the worst times, to the principles of liberty.

"*January* 31*st.*—So Lord Holland, according to

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the projected arrangement, has *not* a seat in the cabinet. He has been too disinterested; and the future operations of this ministry may suffer for it. He determined not to take a step higher than Lauderdale, who has been absent all the while; Holland would not consent to be raised over him. He has given way likewise for Lord Henry Petty, in order to secure him a high situation. Lord Grenville was desirous to have the Home Department, on account of the difficulty of holding together the offices of first Lord of the Treasury and Auditor of the Exchequer; in that case, to make Mr. Fox first Lord, and Lord Holland Secretary for Foreign Affairs; Thomas Grenville Chancellor of the Exchequer, or Mr. Grey, and Lord Henry Petty a Lord of the Treasury.

Adam * at his own request is left out of the present arrangement: he probably would find it inconvenient, at present, to sacrifice to a high station his various occupations.

The seals were offered to Chief Justice Mansfield, who refused; then to Ellenborough, who likewise declined them, on the score of his family; speaking at the same time to the Prince in the most proper manner of Erskine: Erskine has been all along perfectly accommodating.

Lord Sidmouth wished to have one friend introduced into the cabinet with him, and he named Lord Buckinghamshire; he was refused, and it was agreed that Lord Ellenborough, as a friend of Sidmouth, should be introduced into the cabinet. A very judicious nomination, considering Ellenborough's original connections; but not agreeable to what one should describe as the most suitable line of conduct for a judge.

* The Right Hon. William Adam.

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Nothing can exceed the cordiality, reasonableness, and moderation, with which the whole progress of the arrangement has been conducted on both sides. Whoever knows Mr. Fox at all, needs no authority as to him: he is in every respect most perfectly satisfied with Lord Grenville.

"*February 3d.* — On Saturday evening (the 1st instant) between seven and eight o'clock, the king sent for Lord Grenville, and made no objection to any person upon the list he had presented at the former interview. They passed from that to what was proposed as a sketch of the fundamental measures of the new administration, contained in a paper which had been drawn up by Lord Grenville and his friends. Whether this had been delivered to the king along with the list of ministers at the first interview, or was now read to his majesty for the first time, I have not been able to learn distinctly. One part of the paper was to this effect, that in the present dangerous circumstances of the country, it was necessary that the unreserved management of the army should be in the hands of ministers. The king stopped at this; he observed that it had always been understood, at least since the time of the Duke of Cumberland, that the entire control and disposal of the army belonged to the crown; and he asked, whether it was meant that the Duke of York should be turned out? Lord Grenville answered, that he could not enter into any explanation of measures further than the paper which he held in his hand. His majesty replied, that it was necessary he should take this again into consideration. At his interview, his manner to Lord Grenville was perfectly civil.

This morning, at noon, Lord Grenville had another interview, by order of the king; at which his majesty

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gave in writing his view of the subject, on which he had stated his objection at the last interview. From this paper, I understand, it appeared that his majesty had misconceived the intention of the persons who are to form the new administration; he had supposed that they meant to impair his royal prerogative of defending the country, and his written paper claimed the preservation of his negative over all their measures with respect to the army. Of course, there could be but one answer to this—that they could have no intention to withdraw any part of their measures from that negative to which they must all be subject. This last part of the story I have heard very indistinctly.

"*February 5th.*—Lord Grenville, at the outset, stated to Mr. Fox, as a condition of their forming an administration, that the accusation of Lord Wellesley should not be made a cabinet measure. Fox yielded to this, but said he would not pledge himself not to support the accusation if it were otherwise brought forward. Lord Grenville required, also, that no person should be appointed President of the Board of Control who should bring forward the accusation of Lord Wellesley as minister of that board. This was agreed to.

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Among the last entries in Mr. Horner's Journal, there is the following, dated the 1st of Feb. 1806:—

"The events of this week have led me to review very anxiously my original schemes, and to consider my future prospects. I have fortified myself by referring to such notes as I had put down from time to time, in the course of former meditations of the same kind. I shall collect them here, as much in the order of time as I can."

Then follow a number of notes, written at various times, on fragments of paper, the most of them with

1806. Æt. 28. dates, which are stuck with wafers upon the leaves of the Journal, each leaf being headed 1st of February. In some of them, the words are so abbreviated that they are not intelligible: those that are distinct I insert here, as they are characteristic of Mr. Horner's habits of reflection, self-examination, and system; and as they serve to indicate what were still the objects of his ambition at this more advanced period (the commencement of his political life), and the principles and rules of conduct by which he purposed to guide himself.

The first in order is thus headed:—

"*Georgica Animi, et Fabrica Fortunæ.*"*

"1802, *May 9th.*—*Walk.*

"Political engagements, perhaps about fifty years of age—interest and study to be pursued till active scene opens. Must act upon the vantage ground of independence acquired professionally, as well as of professional reputation.

"1802, *May 10th.*—*Study.*

"*Subjects of Meditation.*

"1. Society to form in metropolis—characters to study—scale of intimacies—in what consists intimacy?

"2. Style of conversation to cultivate.

"3. The use of other men's minds in conducting self-education.

"4. The regulation of ambition in all its shapes.

"5. Regulation of political sentiments, connections, and conduct.

"6. Regulation of all the habits and feelings connected with money. This more immediately necessary, from carelessness, want of economy, &c.

* See *ante*, page 196.

" 7. Immense importance of steadily systematizing all views and plans of life, and of so providing against contingencies, as to put happiness at least out of the reach of accident. 1806. Æt. 28.

" In the cultivation of moral feelings, of great utility to lay hold of dignified sentiments and pleasing associations, however furnished — whether by poetry, by moralists, or by actual scenes of life.

" 8. Expression of opinions concerning religion.

" 9. Various intellectual powers to be acquired, and habits to be guarded against.

" *May 11th.* — *Walk.*

" 10. Corrective discipline of feeling; give more truth and more enlargement.

" 11. More acute sensibility to the proprieties of conversation, character, and company.

" *June 11th.* — *Evening.*

" Political *virtue*, political *sagacity*, political *science*, are three great branches of habit to be cultivated; and so, that by being blended together in the mind, they may strengthen as well as purify each other.

" *November 26th.* — *Evening.*

" Future prospects, *usque ad extremum vitæ*, arranged and defined: viz.

" *Object:* — influence, in advancing the progress of the public mind and the public fortunes, as a political philosopher. By situation in active life, if circumstances permit; if these should fail, by writings addressed to future ages.

" The three great preparations for this noble scheme are, a complete study of political science, and the acquisition of powers as a public speaker, and as a writer. In the present aspect of my future life, which is ambiguous, I must apply resolutely to these three

1806. objects; all of which will be useful, whatever line my
ÆT. 28. fortunes shall take.

"It is to give myself a chance for *acting* in public life, that I shall laboriously devote myself to the law; if I succeed in which, I have two chances for a public scene; either as a judge, which, if in a supreme situation, I should consider as the most dignified, and in which a beneficial and permanent influence might be impressed; or, secondly, upon the foundation of an independence acquired professionally, *place myself* in a public situation, where the results of political philosophy may be applied to the exercise of the great duties of legislation.

"If I do not succeed in the profession, I must of course give up all thoughts of active life, and endeavour to exert that influence, and to enlarge those results, by compositions of a general nature. The sketches of all these must of course be formed in that course of study which prepares me for either alternative. It seems to me wise, it is at least pleasing, thus to place my schemes of ambition beyond the reach of accident; and to plan out for myself a scheme of industry, in which, while my mind and its faculties remain unimpaired, I can never fail to find such opportunities of exertion as may at least keep me perfectly happy in myself, and perhaps render me, in some small degree, useful to mankind.

"The study of *Political Philosophy* must undoubtedly commence with a general survey of philosophical logic; in order to define steadily the object of inquiry, and to acquire a just confidence in the means of investigation specifically adapted to that particular branch of science. This survey of logic implies a view of the relations in which the various sciences stand to each other, and of the various methods by which the

powers of the understanding are aided in prosecuting scientific investigations; the general relations, &c. The two most remarkable methods are, the *mathematical* and the *inductive*. The mathematical method includes a considerable variety; I must examine the general principle in which all of them agree, and the circumstances in which they severally differ. 1806. Æt. 28.

"1803. *October 8th.*—Object and plans systematised; views of regulated ambition; scheme of domestic society; arrangement of remote views; sedate, practical, calm prospect.

"Of the interval that must elapse before the domestic scheme is completed.

"Limitation of objects of study and ambition.

"Papinian, Malesherbes, Lord Somers, Sir Matthew Hale.

"Domestic ethics—*Op. desid.*

"*November 21st.*—Much occasion for self-reproach, on account of irregular performance of professional and of literary duty—for want of economy, management of time, &c.—idle literary musing. Should not indulge in that literature which is so delightful till the *duty of the day* is over, and should render that delight more toilsome by systematic object and dogged pursuit of it even then.

"Prospect, cold and prudential, of future life; both with respect to ambition and to domestic arrangements.

"*Nov. 29th.*—Systematic opinions, at least steady and systematic views of object of government, under form like ours;—regulated views of ambition;—strike just medium of approbation and feeling with regard to present state of affairs and opinions;—ambition of office under the Roman republic, compared with that under English monarchy;—ambition of legal office, in

1806. Æt. 28. what respects similar to that of political office, and in what different;—rules, reduced into practical and ready habit, for judging of the political integrity of public characters; not even acquainted with the duties and proprieties of such a situation.

"1804. *Jan. 9th.*—Use to be made of individual minds:—Sharp, Rogers, Whishaw, Smyth, Dumont.

"Form a connection with the Whig aristocracy of England. Upon what footing do I join? Upon what footing am I at present received or invited? As lawyer to be—as having already studied political philosophy;—preserve this independent character. Early part of Burke's life—Lord Somers's—Romilly's. Transfer of examples and maxims from Plutarch and Livy to England."

### Letter LXXIII. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, The Temple, 4th Feb. 1806.

I have not been from home this morning to gather news; and nothing has been brought to me, except that Lord Eldon took leave of the Court of Chancery this morning, Pigott, as the senior king's counsel, returning an answer. Petty is sent for by express, to kiss hands to-morrow; he will thus avoid the trouble of a second election.

My chief objections to the ministerial arrangements, as now settled, though I have others, are, that the Sidmouth family has unaccountably got so much, that a Scotsman has the patronage of India, and that Lord Ellenborough has a seat in the cabinet. This last appears to me an objection of great moment, both upon constitutional grounds, and in point of party prudence. There is the precedent of Lord Mansfield's

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case; but that does not give an answer satisfactory to my mind. It is against the constitution, both in its forms and its spirit, that the Chief Justice of England should have a seat in the cabinet; and it is a violation of those fundamental principles, on which the purity and integrity of judicial administration rest. He may sit to try those prosecutions, which he has concurred in the cabinet to order; and in all questions of state prosecution, he is a party with the government, instead of being the bulwark to protect the people against power. These general reasons are doubly enforced, in the present instance, by the character and manners of the man; in the year 1801, he changed at an hour's notice the opinions and language of his life, to become a court lawyer; and has never felt the dignity of his great station a restraint upon his temper, from uttering what is to the purpose of the day with the utmost coarseness of factious warfare. I consider his nomination to the cabinet as a foul stain upon the new system of government.

You have probably looked into the foreign papers laid before parliament; in the present imperfect state of the communication, it is a very indistinct story. But there is enough to satisfy one of the precipitation with which every thing was hurried on, and the extreme reluctance of the really efficient part of the Continent, Austria, to be "roused." It surely ought to have appeared a hopeless undertaking, when it became evident that Austria required almost every soldier she brought into the field to be paid by England; for this was proof, she did not yet feel her own injuries or danger from France so keenly, as to be animated by a very hearty resentment. Had such a spirit evinced itself in Austria and Prussia, or even in Austria alone, it was our business to second it and

1806. Æt. 28. co-operate; we can never do more; whereas we made the wild, fatal experiment last year, of giving the first movement to the whole body of Europe, and goading and bribing into measures of aggression a state which did not feel it necessary of her own accord. Whether it was wise in Austria to be so backward and indifferent, till she got the immense bribe from England, is another question; I do not speak of the justice of our cause, but the practicability of urging it in such circumstances.

You think me too much of a Whig to trust me with the anecdotes and scenes in which the Parliament House must be so rich at present. Try me, however, whether I can bear to be amused with the follies of my friends.

Ever yours most truly,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER LXXIV. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, The Temple, 7th Feb. 1806.

I got your kind letter to-day. The election seems pretty sure, yet I cannot help feeling nervous about it. Petty came to town yesterday to receive his seals; I did not see him; but I understand he was in high spirits about the election, counting 340 sure promised votes, if every one came.

I must take another day to utter to you at full length, what has been passing in my mind about these public transactions, which have so unexpectedly come upon us. As I live very close to one corner of the scene, I have kept my eyes wide open, to see all they could take in; and thoug even there I learn what passes only at second-hand, I have been nearer

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than I ever was before to a view of actual affairs. There is nothing I have learned from it with so strong an impression as this lesson, that it is extremely difficult to ascertain, with any thing like fidelity, those anecdotes of conversations, and of individual motives, which your writers of memoirs deliver in such abundance, with perfect confidence.

I have learned also some painful instances of what I was prepared to expect, the rapacious corrupt jobbing of underlings in patriotism, who have been fiercely inquisitorial all their lives, upon the success of their adversary underlings. On the other hand, I have proofs to give you, some other time, of the disinterested and truly public feelings of some of those persons whom I have lately seen most of, which bind me to them more closely than before. From all I can learn, indeed, we have every reason to place our trust in the two leaders of this ministry, from their behaviour to each other in this arrangement; whatever may have been the case with others, both Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville have shown great moderation, and a perfect confidence in each other. If they as perfectly understand each other, with regard to the direction of public measures in future, we shall have an administration of far greater efficiency and success than the appearances of our domestic parties, I must own, would at first lead us to expect.

Faithfully yours,
FRA. HORNER.

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LETTER LXXV. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, The Temple, 28th Feb. 1806.

For the last four days I have very reluctantly put off my intention of writing to you, about a piece of business and emolument which has been conferred on me, until I could inform you that the appointment was officially fixed. I have not yet received that sort of intimation, but I believe there is no uncertainty about it; and I should be sorry if you were to receive any report of it, before you were assured of the fact by myself.

Last Monday evening, almost at midnight, I received a proposal from Lord Minto, to accept of a seat at the Board of Commissioners, established by the East India Company, to adjust the long-disputed claims of the creditors of the Nabob of Arcot. The seat was vacant by the resignation of Mr. Ryder, Lord Harrowby's brother. I had but a few hours to deliberate upon the matter; however, I employed them in taking the advice of Lord Holland, Allen, my father, and Whishaw. I then intimated my readiness to accept of the situation. The points of consideration in my own mind were two; both very material, and either of them perfectly sufficient, if unfavourably determined, to have decided me against accepting of the place. The one was, whether this obligation received from Lord Minto, at the same time that it bound me to gratitude for a very considerable, unexpected and unsolicited favour, could ever be construed into a political connexion with his lordship personally, or fetter, in any measure, the freedom of my opinions or future conduct in matters of government. My own scruples on this point were entirely

dissipated by the manner in which they were treated by Lord Holland and Whishaw, and afterwards by Lord Henry, to whom I had not an opportunity of stating them till I had accepted of the offer. The other consideration was, how far the occupations of this commission would encroach upon my time, or interfere with my preparations for the great purpose of my whole life — success in the law; upon this part of the case I have yielded to the authority of Whishaw, though not with so absolute a consciousness of the prudence of the measure, in this respect, as I should be happy to possess. It must occupy a great deal of time, I suspect, particularly at first; the investigations, however, are very much of a legal character, as our business is to determine the validity or fraud of claims of debt. The Indian details, which must be taken into evidence, will not be altogether foreign to my own plans of political reading. You see thus that I am upon the eve of being a sort of placeman. I expect to receive your opinion as to what I was forced to determine on before I could take your advice, and also your advice for my future operations. As I have not actually received my appointment, you need not mention it till I give you notice of that; unless it should be talked of, when you may, of course, explain the matter to my friends. I owe it entirely to the kindness of Lord Minto, whom I have never known much, and who upon this occasion was neither solicited by myself nor prompted by any of my friends.

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I have great satisfaction in answering your inquiries about Petty, whom I have seen several times since his elevation. He is surrounded with novelties, and difficulties of business; but he sets to them with great ardour, and preserves his spirits and cheerful-

1806. ÆT. 28. ness quite as he used to be. Nothing can be more agreeable to all my opinions and sentiments, than the tone in which he speaks of his duties and his intentions. I shall write to you very soon again more at length upon the different subjects of your last letter; probably to-morrow. Remember me to all my friends, and believe me most truly yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER LXXVI. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, The Temple, 6th March, 1806.

I have only a minute to give you: I have heard nothing farther on the subject I mentioned to you in my last letter; only be assured of this, that I shall accept of no employment, whatever the reward may be, that would interfere with my views in the law. In truth, I have not yet been able to collect information enough to satisfy me upon this head; and therefore the acceptance on my part is not yet definitive. I am quite positive, and clear-sighted, upon the prudence of making the law my ground. I repeat this so often, because you may have given way to a little of the suspicions which I can see are entertained by some of my friends who know me less than you do.

Lady Campbell, whom I saw yesterday, desired me to second her orders for your visit to London this spring. I promised to do so. You know the comfort and delight it gives me, to have an opportunity of discussing with you our own concerns; I must selfishly confess, I enjoyed this more completely last autumn, than I can hope to do in the spring season. But I ought to remember my promise to Lady Camp-

bell. You shall hear from me very soon again; when I hope I shall not be out of breath with haste as I am now. 1806. Æt. 28.

Ever most truly yours,
FRA. HORNER.

LETTER LXXVII. FROM J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Horner, Edinburgh, 11th March, 1806.

I have two kind letters from you to acknowledge, and I am afraid that I shall not be able to finish this letter in time for this day's post, so I must remain another post in your debt. That would not lie heavy on my conscience, had I not so much to write about, that I should like to divide it into one or two letters. Before I write of any thing else, I must talk of what interests me most, which is your appointment. I enter most completely into all your views, especially that which you have expressed so strongly in the letter I received to-day, that you will not accept of the situation offered, if it shall interfere at all with your progress in the law. There is great wisdom in forming that resolution. No political situation is half so respectable. I think, however, there is some risk that, although the business which it will give you will not prevent you from carrying on your legal studies, it may ultimately lead to some political situation. I therefore wish to strengthen all your resolutions in favour of the law; and wish you, while you accept of this situation, to be much on your guard against yourself.

Seymour and I have talked a good deal about you, and I observe he is much more doubtful whether you will ultimately follow out your legal views than I am.

1806. Æt. 28. I own my chief objection to a situation of that kind, to a young lawyer, is the income which it gives. I believe that a certain amount of poverty and difficulties is essential as a stimulus for submitting to legal drudgery. After the habits are once formed, they can be preserved without the same motives. I own, therefore, I wish you had got through the labours of the Special Pleader's and Draftsman's office. That is the only difficulty I have, but I am confident you can surmount it. There are some things, however, which I hope you will have constantly in view, and I shall never fail in reminding you of them from time to time;—first, always to live in such a manner as will expose you to no inconvenience, if you shall give up your present situation; I could almost, in that point of view, wish there was no salary attached to it, because it is hardly possible to receive a salary, without living upon it as permanent. You must also consider, that when you come to engage in the active pursuits of law, you must give up what will not be reckoned income,but what is much more gratifying to your feelings—I mean the enjoyments of a most refined society, where you possess every luxury which the largest fortune could give you. I have no doubt that if this business of the Nabob of Arcot's were at an end, you would be desired to accept of some political situation, which would both present to you all the allurements of an income equal to your wants, and would be perfectly compatible with remaining in the society which you like. This you are fully on your guard against; but, as Dr. Grieve would say, you must watch round Zion.

The next thing to be considered is, going into Parliament. If you accept of this situation, I should think it very probable you will be offered a seat in

Parliament. I do not say immediately, but in the course of the year, or at the next election. I should not have objected to your going into Parliament, if the former ministry had attempted to keep their places. It would have been a most laudable act to have assisted in driving them out, and the state of the country was such as to make it a duty to sacrifice every thing else for such an object. But Parliament does not now give the same field for showing talents; and if a person goes into Parliament with a party who are in power, he will feel himself strongly called to remain in it, should they be forced out of power. I think that would be your feeling, though it is not the sort of motive which weighs with vulgar politicians. It would certainly be a gratification to you to be in Parliament; but I think you ought to be on your guard against it on that very account, and to resolve firmly, on no account and on no terms, to go into Parliament. 1806. Æt. 28.

I should not object to your being in Parliament, without being commissioner, or *vice versâ;* if you are both at the same time, I own I think you will meet with great difficulties in devoting yourself to the practice of law; such as, I am afraid, would prove insuperable. Accounts of your appointment have come here from various quarters; I therefore mentioned it to Seymour, Jeffrey, and Thomson.

Farewell, my dear Horner, and believe me yours truly,

J. A. Murray.

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LETTER LXXVIII. FROM LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.

Dear Horner, Edinburgh, 11th March, 1806.

Your last letter to Murray, which I saw this morning, seemed almost intended to meet our principal objection to your recent appointment, and I could not help taking to myself the last passage in the paragraph upon that subject, where you point at some of your friends, who doubt your steady devotion to the study of the law. In our conversation last autumn, I gave you my sentiments respecting yourself very freely; and though your declarations, at that time, made me think you more firmly attached to the profession than I did before, still in anticipating the fortunes of your life, I allowed much for the influence of the society of men engaged in politics, and for the demand, not only from party, but from the public, for superior talents joined to integrity.

I do so now, notwithstanding what I read from you this morning; and yet I am not uneasy about you, for I do not fear that you will sacrifice your dignity or independence through a love of power, or to gratify a faction. But if I can at all estimate your abilities, your dispositions, your general views, and your reputation in the world, I foresee that the course of events must invite you, upon your own terms, to some high public station, long before you can rise to eminence by the toilsome paths of legal practice.

Were I to indulge my own wishes for the just display of your character, and for the benefit of the country, I should welcome such an occasion with joy. But the obstacle of a want of pecuniary independence checks my sanguine views respecting you, and obliges me to resign you to the prudent track of professional

labour. Circumstances may indeed be imagined, in which the offer of power would be accompanied by that of such permanent emolument, as might remove this obstacle. Hopes of this kind, however, ought scarcely to be entertained by your friends, and I am sure you will be the last to admit them. It remains, therefore, that every thing should be done to strengthen your resolution of clinging closely to your profession, till you have securely laid the humble, but essential basis on which you may rest the whole machinery of that public influence, which I hope hereafter to see you in possession of. In adhering to your plan, you have many temptations to resist, and those temptations are likely to increase. Formerly you had merely to sacrifice the gratification of your taste for science; you have now to guard against the incitements of the literary luxuries, as well as the political ardour, of the society in which you live. You will soon have to withstand the direct allurements of power, and of the applause which attends the patriotic statesman. With regard to your late appointment, you seem to have weighed so justly the danger of its interference with your professional studies, that nothing is left for a friend but to approve of your views of the subject. Yet I sincerely hope that the two occupations will not be found incompatible; for this new situation must bring you forward advantageously to public notice, and afford you an opportunity of acquiring some knowledge respecting that important but mysterious branch of our politics, the affairs of India.

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In a letter to Murray, you mentioned the ill success of Lancaster's proposals among the parochial clergy. No wonder, — but the laity will be found liberal enough to carry him on. The reception of Lancaster's proposals may afford us a good test of the liberality of

1806. Æt. 28. the age with respect to sectarian doctrines. Those who wish to remove the political disabilities of Dissenters will do well to attend to it. How has Lancaster been going on of late?

Yours ever sincerely,

WEBB SEYMOUR.

LETTER LXXIX. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, The Temple, 15th March, 1806.

Since I wrote to you last, my appointment has been completed, and this day, to speak accurately as a Commissioner, I took my seat at the Board. I know little as yet, even about the probability of my being much engaged by this business; there will be a good deal of Indian detail to learn, and occasionally perplexed points of evidence and law to adjust. All this will be good for me, and to my purpose. I cannot speak of my colleagues yet, except that they received me with great civility, and are gentlemen in their manners; there is a good-natured importance of office in Hobhouse*, which seems as if it might be easily satisfied, and I hear very good reports of Mr. Cockburn†, but the best I know of him is, that he knows my friends the Riddells. Set your mind at ease about the salary; I believe it is to be just as you would have arranged it, that is, there is to be no salary at all, nor any present emolument. I have made no inquiries upon this part of the subject; I told you the hint Lord Minto dropped about a fixed allowance; the Chairman however, in a parenthesis of the same sort, gave me to understand that there was

* The late Sir Benjamin Hobhouse.

† Thomas Cockburn, Esq., late in the Civil Service of the East India Company at Madras, now resident at Roehampton.

no intention of compensating us, except by a vote at the conclusion of our labours. This is the part of the business about which I am least concerned, though I am not fool enough to say this to any body who is not ready to take it on my word. It would be very satisfactory to me to have a permanent enlargement of income, which might enable me if not to establish myself, at least to ease my father of what may be required for the establishment of other members of the family. But a precarious income would very probably render me liable to those contingent disadvantages, which you have so justly stated. If I do justice to myself, by working at law, I have but little fears of being independent at least, as soon as perhaps it would be good for me. You understand all this perfectly. 1806. Æt. 28.

I cannot express to you how keenly I feel all your kindness; your letter yesterday, on which I have volumes to write to you, increases all your former proofs of it. I have a truly friendly letter from Seymour to-day, which I will acknowledge in a post or two. Of course I intrust you to communicate to him, Jeffrey, and Mr. Stewart, whatever you choose with regard to my concerns.

Ever faithfully yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER LXXX. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, The Temple, 25th March, 1806.

I hope your retirement at Burntisland has refreshed you from all the feverish fatigue, which the business and raking of an Edinburgh winter infallibly produce. It gave me great pleasure to hear that you

1806. had adopted that excellent mode of treatment; I
Æt. 28. should only have better liked to be with you.

The first thing I wish to say to you, is about your coming up. I own to you that I see nothing at all— not a jot of reason—in the additional argument you state to William, though you do not indeed give it very great weight, that you do not wish to have the appearance of coming near those who are in power. My dear Murray, you are strong enough to entitle you to despise all inferences from appearances; and one shall never get on in the straight road, if one turns out of the way to escape such inferences. No human prudence will guard you from suffering transient imputations from the mean and malignant, who will invent against you when there is nothing visible on which to fix their constructions; and this temporary inconvenience, which the most honourable must undergo, is in the end fully compensated for, by the certain triumph of consistent practical independence. No man is so sure of this victory as yourself; and indeed no one is so little exposed even to malignity and calumny in the mean time. Upon this point, therefore, my counsel is, that you ought not to take the least thought about saving appearances. I quite agree with you, that it would be extremely detrimental to your dignity, if your very near friends were to make applications for your advancement to professional offices; and I have this impression strongly with respect to my own conduct. I should be considered as representing yourself, in any solicitation I should attempt. Your letter to William confirmed me in that idea of propriety. I will even go farther, and agree with you, that it is desirable that whatever may be in reserve for you should not be conferred immediately; you owe nothing personally to Melville indeed, since your little

place was stipulated for by Lord Henderland* when he gave up an equivalent, and had Melville been high in opposition, I would have bid you set his reproach at defiance; the peculiarity of his present circumstances makes a difference, and disposes one to lend to the arguments of the weak a little more force than they actually possess. This might be too fine, if it stood in the way of any thing to be done, or any duty; but in a matter of personal comfort merely, a little fineness too much is worth paying for. 1806. Æt. 28.

In addition to what I have just now said, there seems to me a good deal in what you say, as to the effect a sheriffship, got too soon, might have upon your professional *studies*. There are strong appearances, that the character of your judicial administration will be on a higher footing ten years hence than it has been for the last fifteen years; and I shall be much disappointed if you do not hold one of the first stations. A profound knowledge of the law, practical talents for the despatch of business, united with high personal respectability, make up all the essentials of such a station; official dignities add a little to these at particular periods, when the general administration of which they form a portion distinguishes itself. These periods recur rarely; and official dignity at Edinburgh is not worth the price that in ordinary cases is paid for it; a long servitude to party cabals, party prejudices, and party disappointments. I think we agree very nearly in the view we take of *your* plans and prospects.

Let me now say a little about myself; though I regret you are not to stay another week at Burntisland, that you might have had the luxury, and I the profit, of your ruminating upon all these concerns

* Mr. Murray's father. See page 4.

1806. Æt. 28. of ours in perfect solitude by the calm blue sea, with Edinburgh far away from you as well as London. Your main objections to the late appointment I have accepted, I have already removed; since it gives no immediate income whatever, and can have no tendency to entangle me in politics more than I am already. It is entirely a business of legal arbitration. I am most firmly determined to accept of no political situation under any circumstances that I can at present foresee; this may be a piece of superfluous virtue, as perhaps no such thing would ever be put in my power; it is a virtue, however, for which I believe I can answer, if the trial should come. Every day I have lived in London, and every hour since my own friends came into power, has driven and riveted this opinion into my mind, which I had already formed very clearly before I quitted Scotland. I believe my friends over-rate my ambition immensely, or mistake it; my indolence, my love of quiet lazy pleasures, my habits of indulgence, my gratifications in speculative truth, are so many pledges for my good conduct in this respect. As to accepting a seat in Parliament, if that should ever be offered to me, I am not prepared to acquiesce entirely in the reasons you have stated, which I mention in order to excite you to a farther consideration of the question. Parliamentary distinction forms now but a very small part of my objects; I cannot give myself up wholly to political discussions, and I will not do it by halves: those departments of public business in Parliament, which are connected with the studies and knowledge of a well-educated lawyer, or relate to the improvements of domestic administration, remain open to me; and in these I have some desire to be useful, because a great field of utility lies before one in the present circumstances of this country. If any thing is to be

done in my time upon these subjects, I should like to bear a share. There is another sort of parliamentary discussion, which I like to keep in view; though it has been for some time past out of fashion, it is not out of date, but (I am persuaded) will revive with fresh vigour and new honours; I mean that which is called Constitutional Law, the sound exposition of which needs the combined accomplishments of a lawyer and practical statesman. If I am ever destined to put my name upon the Journals of Parliament, my ambition is to connect it with one or the other of those two branches of public business. Now an early seat in Parliament is advantageous in both respects; for the former, because it is only by seizing successive opportunities, which arise at distant intervals, and each but of a narrow scope, that good is ultimately to be secured by a gradual accumulation of very small portions; and for the latter, because long habits of seeing the constitution actually at work are the only effectual education to the trade of keeping it in order. In all this, I take it for granted, that the seat in Parliament is to be offered to me, in a manner beyond all exception; which, so far as I see the state of matters at present, amounts very nearly, I assure you, to a negative upon all these pretty visions. But we proceed hypothetically in the whole of this consultation. I would not accept of what is called a Treasury seat in Parliament, from which I should be turned out upon the next change of ministers. A good close Whig borough, the property of a very staunch old Whig family, might tempt me; though even that is not free from objections. I had much rather go in as an opposition member at all events.

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Let me hear from you soon on these matters.

Ever truly yours,

Fra. Horner.

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LETTER LXXXI. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, The Temple, 12th May, 1806.

The great event, which occupies us all in London, has drawn nearer its conclusion; and has already passed its most critical stage. In the view which I take of the lasting consequences that will ensue from the result of Lord Melville's trial, I might have expected that no circumstance could collaterally add any interest to it. But as Saturday drew near, my anxiety for Romilly's first public appearance had swallowed up every other concern. It was not that I felt any doubts of his talent, for the conduct of such an affair, or that I was not even quite sure he would distinguish himself greatly; it was this very confidence which filled me with solicitude to witness all the circumstances of an occasion, which was to reward a long course of severe independence, modest study, and the practice of every virtue, by opening to him a new career of utility and fame. He has now placed himself in his rank; the notoriety of his talents and accomplishments assigns him already his station as a public personage, and the proofs he cannot fail very soon to display, of resolute consistency in political principles, will so attract to him, I am persuaded, the confidence of all liberal men, that in the times we have to observe or act in, he must have the most important weight in the state. Among the many circumstances which sadden me respecting the race of public men now coming upon the stage, it is a compensation almost against them all, that, for a period at least, we shall have Romilly's exertions and name on the side of liberty and justice. Perhaps you will think my language exaggerated; I can only

say that it very faithfully expresses my present sentiments and expectations; though it is possible one's fancy might be heated, after having long revered the past tenor of his life, to witness it in the very act of spreading out into a larger sphere, under all the splendid circumstances of the audience and ceremonial of Westminster Hall. But I must come down to particulars. 1806. Æt. 28.

*May* 13.—These particulars I cannot come to yet. I wrote the first part of this sheet in bed at a very late hour, and all this morning I have been down hearing Plomer's speech in defence, of which I have sent a short account to Jeffrey, for which I must refer you to him. I shall take another day to give you my criticisms on Romilly's speech, as well as an account of the character given of it by various sets of people.

I shall write very soon again, and am

Most affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

*Extract from a Letter to Mrs. Dugald Stewart, May 19th, 1806.*

"Romilly's success was as great as his friends predicted. He spoke for three hours and a half, and his speech might be named as the model of the simple style. Had he hazarded more, he might have produced passages of more striking effect for a moment; had he been more declamatory, he would have collected more suffrages in the express praise of his eloquence. For I have heard it observed, that the speech had nothing but good sense, perfect clearness, and a strong cause. The fact is, he kept every one chained in attention, and made the whole case distinct.

1806. Æt. 28. to the dullest. Particular parts of the composition there certainly were, that might be enumerated on account of their being more impressive, more indignant, more finely pointed, than the rest; but they were so in *keeping* with the whole, that the prevailing tone was only heightened, never interrupted. One might have said, his taste was too severe, too simple, if it had betrayed itself by a single false step; but it was so maintained throughout, and the execution all so uniform, and the general designing of the speech in so great a style, as to give it the rank of the highest order of compositions. It wanted only a finished conclusion; for he ended abruptly: he had one prepared, but something, he says, occurred in the course of his delivery, which prevented him from giving it, and he did not like to venture a composition of that formal sort upon the spot. I very much suspect, that the fastidiousness of his judgment, his great modesty and horror at any thing like display, rushed all back upon him about ten minutes too soon. His language is free from all ambition and curious adaptation, and therefore one never remarked felicities at the moment; and if he used any figurative expressions, they were so melted into the substance of his style, as to produce their effect without being noticed.

"F. H."

### Letter LXXXII. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, The Temple, 16th June, 1806.

I should have been very impatient under your long silence, if I had not learned from Jeffrey that you have been very busy. I write now to mention a

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little plan which has offered itself to me, among many others that I have been considering for our better enjoyment of each other's society, when you come to the south. It is this; that we should pass a week or two, at least, at some one fixed spot upon the sea coast; a cleaner and greener Burntisland. I wish to read a good deal this autumn, and for that purpose to station myself in some southern village, at a good distance from London; would it not be delightful, therefore, and very profitable, that you should see me well settled, and that my first fortnight should be seasoned with your conversation? And my particular reason for mentioning all this so soon to you is, that I think if you have any little by-job of reading or writing, such as would occupy three weeks, you could not do it better than at such a time, and in such a place. We should have our regular hours of working and walking; do carve out some little scheme, therefore, of labour, and we shall make the time the happiest of our life. My eye is turned to the coast of Dorset or Devon; where there are places to be had, unknown to Londoners and Lakers: my servant will be enough for us; and in going down, we may see some of that country which we had laid out for our excursion last summer. If you have not some unanswerable objections to so pretty a plan, talk to Seymour about the coast of Devonshire; he knows "each bosky bourne from side to side," and will tell you where we may be best accommodated, most secluded, and most surrounded with picturesque scenery to walk through. There is but one little circumstance which may defeat so pleasing an arrangement; my being confined to London all the summer and autumn. I hope it is not likely, but it is possible.

1806. Æt. 28. I am very far from agreeing with you in our feelings on the event of Lord Melville's trial. On the contrary, I consider his acquittal as a foul stain upon the records of parliamentary justice; bringing the mode of trial by impeachment into disgrace, and subjecting the House of Lords to the distrust and contempt of the public. Upon party occasions, I never pretend to speak otherwise than as a party man, because, for a time at least, I have given myself to that profession, with a view of being perhaps useful. I think I am sufficiently aware that the habits of that connection insensibly debauch our judgment, even for occasions that ought to be exempt from its influence: but I can perfectly and securely distinguish between the stronger bias, or the higher colouring, which party feelings communicate to my opinion and the substantial frame and fabric of that opinion reared out of the evidence laid before me by the natural use of my understanding. I am sure I am honest at least in stating it as the conviction of my understanding, whether accurate or not, that the acquittal of Lord Melville is a verdict contrary to plain strong accumulated evidence; and after that, I will farther say, that I consider that verdict to have been pronounced, by a great proportion of those who acquitted him, with a corrupt consciousness of its being contrary to evidence, or a corrupt prostitution of the *honour* which they pledged without having considered the evidence. This is the opinion of many unbiassed persons, who have no knowledge of parties, or interest in their passions; among the fifty-four peers, who thought him guilty of some charges as they were expressed in the articles, there were many of this description; and whatever Lord Melville's friends may say, or he *himself* may feel, such of his friends as are more sensitive to honour

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than he is (he has many such), cannot feel a very proud exultation, when they look at the sort of acquittal he has received, or look forward with much confidence to the future verdict of posterity and history. That you and I should take different interests in the *effect* this may possibly have upon the revolutions of domestic party, and that we should entertain different sentiments personally towards Lord Melville; that you, for instance, should be glad for the sake of his friends that he should *get off*, though he might deserve punishment, and that I should regret it on other grounds than merely the defeat of justice, is very possible: but I have no doubt we shall think quite alike upon the evidence, considering it as a question of evidence and parliamentary law, when you come to read the proceedings. I have said this much now, in order to banish the odious subject from my mind; it has given me much disgust and despondency with respect to public affairs, and I have often reflected, since last Thursday, what a waste of individual happiness there is, in committing the fate of one's hopes, or even curiosity, to such an adventure as the chances of political event, where every expectation of good is disappointed, and the little that does come in in one's day is got by stealth or accident, when one might secure a steady and growing indulgence in the pursuits of science or the confidences of private friendship.

You will think this a most formidable letter, and, perhaps, that I make a very unequal return for those "few and far between" you have written to me for the last two months.

Affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

1806. Æt. 28. JOURNAL. "*Monday, June 23d.*—Dining at the Duke of Somerset's on Saturday, where Lord Henry Petty was, he took me aside in the evening, and communicated to me a proposal from Lord Kinnaird to bring me into the House of Commons next Parliament. The intention of Lord Kinnaird was, he said, to purchase the seat in one of those burghs where the Treasury alone could oppose him, provided the Treasury waived their right of interference, and to nominate me (if I consented) to the seat; Lord Henry Petty added that he wished much to see me in Parliament, and that he was sure there would be no difficulty in securing that arrangement with the Treasury. My answer was, that it was a subject on which it would be necessary for me to reflect for a few days, before I could come to a decision; in the mean time it was necessary for me to say, that I could myself afford no expense; that I would never come into Parliament with instructions from any man; that my political attachment was to Mr. Fox's party; that it would be right therefore for me to be satisfied that Lord Kinnaird's views were in the same direction, and likely to be steady, but that upon that point I should chiefly rely upon his (Petty's) opinion. Lord Henry then said, that he had himself considered the proposal repeatedly in this point of view, and that he was very much satisfied of its propriety in that respect. I requested him to weigh it over again in his mind, before I had an opportunity of seeing him; and I said, that if that point of the case were quite right, I should think this mode of coming into Parliament very respectable and honourable, and that at any rate I was much affected with such an instance of Kinnaird's esteem, with whom I had maintained but a very slight intercourse since I came to London,

though we had been intimately connected at Edinburgh. Lord Henry said, he had no doubt of Kinnaird's steady attachment to them, that his marriage would probably corroborate it; he had views of his own, no doubt, but he (Petty) thought they were very fair. This, I suppose, alluded to a demand of a British peerage."* 1806. Æt. 28.

LETTER LXXXIII. TO LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.

My dear Seymour, The Temple, 26th June, 1806.

There is a subject on which I should most anxiously have consulted you within these four days, if I had had you here; I was not altogether unprovided with former meditations of my own upon such a contingency, nor with the result of former counsels with my few intimate friends as well as you; but at the last, I have been called upon to decide with less discussion at the time than I like to have. A proposition, in short, has been made to me to come into Parliament at the next general election, and I have declared my readiness to acquiesce in the proposed arrangement. I am not yet at liberty to explain to you the particular quarter from which this offer has been made to me; though very unexpected, there are circumstances in it both gratifying and respectable, and upon the whole quite as satisfactory as any introduction into the House of Commons can be, that is not obtained in the way of popular election, or by one's own money. It is proper that you should keep this information entirely to yourself at present, for many reasons that affect others as well as me. But

* This is the last entry in Mr. Horner's Journal. — ED.

1806. Æt. 28.

on all occasions that so deeply concern me, I have a real comfort in confiding myself to you. I shall see Murray so soon in person, that I shall hardly make the communication to him till then; indeed the opinion which I know he entertains upon this subject makes me feel far from being satisfied with the step I have taken, for he will regard it, I fear, as a very imprudent risk. After turning it, however, very often in my mind, when I fancied the possibility of such an offer being one day made, I have never succeeded in subduing my strong inclinations, nor even in beating them out of the argument. A risk no doubt there is; but it is the risk inherent in the plan of life which I have long ago sketched for myself, and to which my ambition and my most reflected principles of approbation are steadily attached. A lawyer only, I never could consent to be, no more than to be merely a political adventurer; for mere emolument has no other attraction for me but the independence it gives, and mere office has no attraction at all. To carry on at the same time my professional views, and to bear a share in the great interesting discussions of public business, forms a combination not often tried with success, but which I long ago resolved to try. The question no doubt still remains, whether the active union of the two may not be attempted too soon; and if I have solved this question at all to my satisfaction, it is in this way, that I *am* about to begin it somewhat too soon: but opportunity is an element to be calculated in all such reasonings, and is one risk of another sort with which the other must be balanced.

Though I have gone so far as to express my willingness to accept of this proposal, it is not yet definitely settled by any means; for I have not had an

interview upon the subject with the person principally concerned, and many accidents may be in store to disconcert the arrangement. But it will probably end successfully, or lead to something else of the same sort. 1806. Æt. 28.

I expect and request to receive your sentiments upon what I have now explained to you, as well as your counsel with regard to the future. You know how much I value your opinions, and I am sure they have upon many occasions kept me more firm, as well as more delicate, in my conduct than I could otherwise have been. You are in this particular affair already committed too, both by the constant tenour of your advice to me, and particularly by the effect of a letter you wrote from Oxford last September, which with another from Murray of opposite sentiments, and one from Jeffrey more consonant with yours, were the privy council I carried with me to Hampstead on Sunday last, when I deliberated upon this important measure. I settled it in my own mind first; and I am happy to say that I have received the approbation of my father and Whishaw, to whom alone I have made it known.

Ever most affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

### LETTER LXXXIV. FROM LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.

My dear Horner, Edinburgh, 7th July, 1806.

Were we, as I often wish, to write more frequently, I should scarcely begin so formally as to assure you of the deep interest with which I read your last letter. The crisis has been an important one, and I have discussed your conduct in my own

1806. Æt. 28. mind as if I had been talking to yourself. In my letter of September last, and in our conversation soon after at Brunet's, I gave you a sketch of what I thought the course of your life would probably be, considering the combined effect of all the circumstances and motives by which you seemed to be actuated. At that time your ambition, your habits, and your connections all pointed to a political career; and I did not much wish to check it, because opportunity promised fair, and because I have always been anxious to see you in a situation consonant to your views, honourable to yourself and friends, and beneficial to the country. The declaration you made of a resolution to attain independence by your profession, I heard with some distrust of the constancy of such a motive. In the course of the winter, frequent conversation with Murray corrected my sanguine prospects respecting you; and in a letter three or four months ago I joined with him in urging you to resist the temptations of political connection, and to prosecute your professional studies with steadiness. It gave me satisfaction to learn not long since, through Thomson, that law was now a serious occupation with you, and I rested in the idea of your more tardy but safer rise to political eminence. You will infer from all this, that your late decision meets with my disapprobation; I will not say that it does so strongly, and yet it does.

In order that you might hold the proud station in public life for which I have always destined you, I wished to see you step forward from the firmest basis of independent character, and with this independence of fortune is closely connected. A few years devoted to your profession would have given you, not independence of fortune, but that to which you might

ever after resort for such independence. They would have given also a greater stability to that high, disinterested character, which you have justly obtained among a large circle of men of rank, talents, and virtue, and there would have been a dignity arising from the rejection of those sources of emolument or distinction, which it must be known that friendship placed within your reach. You would have found advantage in the longer period afforded you for forming a candid estimate of men and parties, for collecting information respecting the circumstances of the country, domestic as well as foreign, for digesting plans of legislative improvement, and I may add, for strengthening, during a close insight into the course of affairs, those principles which seldom continue unimpaired amidst the violence or the cankering corruption of party zeal. 1806. Æt. 28.

But you will say, in going into Parliament I neither abandon my profession, nor my independence. As to the latter, I do not fear any important sacrifice, but you must be conscious that the firmness with which you would now resist the influence of party friends, would be very different from what it might be five or seven years hence. To give your opinions weight in debate, the *appearance* of independence is also of consequence, and such appearances will now be far less favourable, than they would have been, had you entered Parliament as a man rising steadily in the profession of the law, and known to be neither under the necessity, or in the disposition, to look to power for advancement. As to your profession, I tell you frankly, that as soon as you enter the House, I think it will be almost totally neglected. You may promise, perhaps, to confine yourself to the great questions of Parliamentary discussion, but considering the interest you have always

1806. taken in politics, and the power of speculations in
Æt. 28. political economy to seduce you from the study of law, it is plain that much of your time will be occupied by the legislative application of your favourite principles in measures of local or inferior importance, especially as the gratifying pursuit will be sanctioned by a sense of public duty. Besides, the business of the House, and the society into which it will lead you, will more than ever draw your attention to subjects of literature and moral science; and if temptations of this kind have hitherto been often ill withstood, how much less will they be so hereafter? Nor can I conceive it possible for you to be long in parliament, without being seduced, or forced, into office. There is at present a lamentable dearth of young men of political talents, and you would be such a valuable accession to any party, that you might soon command office upon your own terms, so as to preserve your integrity and independence. If then you go into Parliament, my prospects respecting you will revert to what they were last summer. I shall look upon you as advancing to fame and to power by steps that are honourable, and more rapid than if you had continued to tread the wearisome path of your profession; but, at the same time, with more hazard to your reputation, and to your integrity and wisdom as a politician.

I agree with you in thinking that you are going to attempt the union of parliamentary business with your profession too soon; at least too soon for that secure and steady career which you had planned in your calmest moments. Whishaw's opinion is a strong one in support of the decision you have made, but I know Whishaw's keenness in party politics; he is upon the scene of action, and his anxiety to have your

talents brought forward on the side of his darling principles may have biassed his judgment. You plead opportunity as a ground for incurring risk; but you do not think highly enough of yourself, if you do not foresee that opportunities, like the present, will become more frequent, as the character and connections which gained you this are more confirmed. If you can retreat with honour from the consent you have given, I should advise it. In resisting temptation, or in the discharge of a duty, it is more easy and more safe to make one decisive effort, than continual, though more feeble, struggles; and if you seriously intend to prosecute the study of the law, you may, by this one act of self-denial, save yourself a fatiguing contest between the avocations of Parliament and those of your profession. I say this, on the supposition that the claims of professional duty would triumph, though I have already expressed my own decided opinion to the contrary. 1806. Æt. 28.

If you are so far pledged that you cannot retract, or if your own judgment, and the approbation of other friends, lead you to persevere, it will remain to devise some fetters to bind you to such an adjustment of your occupations, as prudence dictates; but little do I expect that such can be found. Indeed, this late occurrence has strongly awakened the anticipations I have for two or three years entertained, concerning your progress in life. I have pictured a man of a high spirit of independence, resolving to advance himself by his own patient exertions in a profession of which the practical details are ill suited to his habits,—distracted from the prosecution of it by a taste for higher intellectual occupations, and by a nobler ambition for political fame and influence,—often from principle refusing, and yet often accepting, the

1806. Æt. 28. prizes which fortune, impelled by his own merits, and by his own desires, however restrained, still throws in his way; and rising ultimately to the highest stations, partly by favour of successive accidental circumstances, which a dignity of mind that gave him a confident hope to command his destiny, would have never allowed him at the outset to take into calculation. In the compass of a letter it is difficult to convey one's views on so comprehensive a subject with tolerable accuracy; but you flatter me by saying that the hints I have formerly given were of use to you, and what I have now written is dictated by the same warm wishes for your welfare.

Playfair, I hear, is to arrive on Saturday. We shall hasten our departure for the Highlands as much as possible. I look forward to his society in our tour for much pleasure and instruction. His travelling with Miss Hamilton* affords his friends here much amusement. What a joke it must be for Sydney! Remember me to that witty wight, and to all other friends.

I am now fixed for remaining here next winter. My studies will be the same as during the last: I have worked steadily, but my progress, as usual, has been slow. The foundation is laid at least.

Yours ever affectionately,

WEBB SEYMOUR.

LETTER LXXXV. TO LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.

My dear Seymour, Temple, 11th July, 1806.

Your letter arrived while I was in the midst of a legal meditation for the House of Lords to-day,

* Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton, authoress of "The Cottagers of Glenburnie," &c. — ED.

adjusting this argument here, and that there. You put them all into medley; and the picture I had been drawing in my head is become more like a painter's pallet than his canvass. I cannot set to my work again without thanking you for your valuable and truly friendly communication; I shall take up the whole subject again anew, nor shall I find any difficulty in retracting the consent I had given, if I ultimately determine that to be the right thing to do. In my former consideration of the subject, I confidently set down your opinion on the affirmative side; after detecting such an error in my data, I must go over the whole calculation again. I never can be sufficiently grateful for the possession of such friends as I have, though, alas! they are most of them four hundred miles from me. They overrate me excessively; but, by striving to make myself worthy of part of their opinion, I shall accomplish more than any other motive would have secured.

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Ever most truly yours,
FRA. HORNER.

LETTER LXXXVI. TO FRANCIS JEFFREY, ESQ.

My dear Jeffrey, Temple, 15th Sept. 1806.

It was the day you left us that Fox was again taken ill; and he is now no more. It has been a painful anxious week; for after all had been given over, there was a strange renovation that deluded us, in spite of our despair. It is a cruel disappointment, if one thinks of the hopes so recently indulged; and a cheerless prospect forward. The giant race is extinct; and we are left in the hands of little ones, whom we know to be diminutive, having measured them against the

1806. Æt. 29.

others. Tell me what view you take of our situation, where you stand; careless as you are of public events, you are not indifferent (I know) at these critical moments, when lasting and large interests are involved in the turn which is given to the conduct of individuals. I have had but a short time to collect my thoughts; my own little line of conduct was long ago determined: but one must form a sort of chart of the future, in order that our rule may be wide enough at least to embrace the probable accidents that will occur. I look upon what has been called Mr. Fox's party, the remains of the old Whig faction, as extinguished entirely with him; his name alone kept the fragments together, after the party had been long ago broken to pieces. At the same time, I cannot resist the conviction, that, in spite of appearances, there is in the middling order of people in this country a broad foundation for a popular party, constituted by the opinions, interests and habits of those numerous families who are characterised by moderate but increasing incomes, a careful education of their youth, and a strict observance of the great common virtues. No doubt, this is the genuine democracy, if they preserve their weight in that public voice, which government must obey. Many circumstances have occurred of late years to depress the just influence of that order of men; and it is melancholy to think, that they are the very circumstances which have brought other free governments to an end — an overgrown foreign trade, the dependencies proceeding from too bulky a system of finance, and an augmentation of the military force on account of foreign danger. These causes, I am persuaded, have already both undermined our institutions, and vitiated the sentiments

and character of the nation. At the same time, it does strike me very forcibly, that the great number among whom wealth is diffused in considerable yet equal portions, the tolerably good education that accompanies it, the strength of physical and moral forces that are thus combined in a population to which both order and freedom are necessary, form a new case very different from any former example; and it is from this aspect of our condition, that I take my hopes of there being still a chance of defending successfully the liberties of England, chance enough to make it a reproach for ever against the present age if it does not make a trial at least. We are deprived, by this calamitous death, of our great leader in all popular principles of administration; no man of acknowledged and commanding talents is left to supply his place. But there are a few men whose integrity and steadiness have been tried; and a few others, younger men, who are confided in by those who know them best. Howick, Lauderdale, Holland, and Petty, are the persons in whom I am inclined to repose my confidence; though it seems to me, that they ought to yield the supremacy to Grenville, while he perseveres in the same honourable conduct to which he has adhered since his junction with Mr. Fox. The new appointment will be a sort of test; not precisely the disposal of the seals, but the manner in which the vacant seat in the cabinet is filled. I look with very great solicitude to the course of parties during the next six months; it will be a period probably, though not at first, of severe and decisive probation. I have no fears of Lord Grenville himself; he is free from all levity or fickleness of conduct, certainly, and has given pledges which he has too much obstinacy as well as honesty to forfeit.

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1806. Æt. 29. A few years of opposition gave him some sentiments which will remain; and the circumstances of his family, their influence, fortune and pretensions, make them now a knot of aristocrats, not ready to submit to the crown, but disposed to make terms. You perceive, therefore, that I consider an alliance with the Grenvilles as a measure of prudence for the Whigs; but my speculations will perhaps appear as fallacious, as you would think the subject of them unworthy of a *philosopher's* approbation, even if they were better founded in themselves. These chances and changes, however, will irresistibly engage my curiosity and reflections for a little while; till I can settle my expectations of what is probable: and I hope you will not wholly refuse to let me have the benefit of your observations.

I have this morning got Walter Scott's volume of Ballads; he has not mended that sad rhyme of Catchedicam, the absurdity and meanness of which spoils a very pleasing set of verses.* I am reading

* In the poem of Helvellyn. Catchedicam is the name of a part of the mountain-group of Helvellyn, in Cumberland.

"I climb'd the dark brow of the mighty Helvellyn,
Lakes and mountains beneath me gleam'd misty and wide;
All was still, save by fits, when the eagle was yelling,
And starting around me, the echoes replied.
On the right, Striden-edge round the Red-tarn was bending,
And Catchedicam its left verge was defending,
One huge nameless rock in the front was ascending,
When I mark'd the sad spot where the wand'rer had died."
1*st Stanza.*

* * * * *

"But meeter for thee, gentle lover of nature,
To lay down thy head like the meek mountain lamb,
When, wilder'd, he drops from some cliff huge in stature,
And draws his last sob by the side of his dam.
And more stately thy couch by this desert lake lying,
Thy obsequies sung by the grey-plover flying,
With one faithful friend but to witness thy dying,
In the arms of Helvellyn and Catchedicam." — *5th Stanza.* — Ed.

Glen Finlass, and St. John again, after many years. Thomson and Murray are both in the country. 1806. Æt. 29.

Ever most truly yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER LXXXVII. FROM LORD KINNAIRD.

Dear Horner, Drimmie House, 19th Oct. 1806.

By the good offices of our friend Petty, I have obtained the promise of a seat in the next parliament, which he has taught me to believe you will not decline. You are too well acquainted with me, to suppose that I attach any condition to this offer; and I have known you too long and too well to doubt your immediate rejection of it, if you were not satisfied that I make it with the sole view of promoting your honour and welfare.

Believe me, dear Horner,

Very faithfully yours,

KINNAIRD.

LETTER LXXXVIII. TO LORD KINNAIRD.

My dear Kinnaird, The Temple, 23d Oct. 1806.

I accept of your generous offer with very great pleasure; you have done me a more valuable service than any other I can ever receive, for which I will not attempt to say how much I thank you, nor how sensible I am of the kindness you express for me in your letter. A seat in the House of Commons was among the earliest objects of my ambition; and having laid it down as a plan of life, from which I wish never to swerve, that I should unite an attention to public

1806. Æt. 29. affairs with the regular pursuit of my profession, I was contented to look towards parliament as a distant prospect. Your friendship removes the interval by which I seemed to be separated from it: and you can imagine how delightful it must be to have a favourite passion indulged, in a manner so agreeable to my private feelings, and to all my public opinions. I shall have the satisfaction of acting along with men of my own age, whom I have long known as thinking alike upon all the great questions in our politics.

Yours faithfully,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER LXXXIX. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, The Temple, 27th Oct. 1806.

I am going off this evening into Cornwall, to be returned for St. Ives—a terrible journey, but it is through Devonshire, and the weather is fine for the season. William Adam goes with me, too, as far as Launceston; he is to appear for Lord Maitland at Camelford.

I am at present in too great a hurry to write to you at length upon some of the subjects which I have most upon my mind for you. For the last fortnight, the dissolution, and a good deal of Carnatic business, have kept me in a great bustle. I flatter myself I am subsiding easily into a man of business, notwithstanding my irregular habits for some time past; but I must not boast too soon.

Brougham will receive orders for his return this week; it is very much to be regretted that he was not at home at this time, for he left no instructions with any person about parliament, and the sum necessary

is too great for any of us to have become answerable for it. Had he been here, he would have judged for himself, and his activity would have carried his object through all obstacles. It cannot be long, however, before a good opportunity will occur; he is too well known now, for him to be suffered to lie unemployed: and that is the scene, I am sure, where he may be employed to the best advantage. 1806. Æt. 29.

You will be glad to hear there is a report that Canning, Frere, &c. mean to back their parliamentary exertions with another newspaper of fun and wit; some of our friends will be scratched, no doubt, but the mischief will not be worse than that, and we shall have some merriment. The letter I received from Kinnaird was satisfactory to me in the highest degree, and (I think) does him much honour.

Ever most affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

### LETTER XC. TO HIS MOTHER.

My dear Mother, St. Ives, 31st Oct. 1806.

Till this evening, I had no news to tell you. I did not come here till this morning, and all day I have been occupied in canvassing the worthy and independent electors of this ancient and free borough. The election is not till Monday; and, what I did not in the least expect, there is an opposition. My brother candidate is Squire Stephens, a man of good fortune, close by the town; and our antagonists are two Indian colonels, Symes the traveller to Ava, and Montgomery, whose history I find nobody here that can tell me; they are in what is called Lord Wellesley's party, both excellent men, I believe, if they did not oppose

1806. Æt. 29. us. From all I can see and learn, we have no reason to fear the event, though they have certainly got a good many votes: the whole number is 250, and we reckon a majority in our favour of 70 clear double votes. I must reserve particular stories till I get home; all I can say is, that I have been a good deal entertained with the novelty of this sort of business to me, improved very much, no doubt, by our confidence of triumph. We go through the country part of the parish to-morrow, having canvassed the town to-day. I am glad enough none of you were here to quiz me as I went through my duty; entering every cellar in the place, and behaving as sweet as possible to every man, woman, and child. I never made so many vows, or shook so many by the hand, in the whole course of my life. There are near thirty fishermen of pilchards, every one of them styled captain; and all of them our fast friends. I met with few rebuffs; the people indeed receiving me with great cordiality and readiness, for which I am willing to forget my friend Sir Christopher*, and impute it all to my talents for popularity. Perhaps you will not give me so much credit. I did sometimes feel ashamed of myself, I own, and there were some hands that went against my stomach; if it had not been for the number of pretty women, three or four of them quite beautiful, whom I found in these hovels. I ought to ask your pardon for all this nonsense; but it is some relief to me at the end of such a day, the worst part of which has been the last, a dinner with two or three of my "friends," who are very tiresome, and can endure port wine more patiently than I can. I ought not to forget, however, to make most honour-

* Sir Christopher Hawkins, the proprietor of the borough.—Ed.

able mention of a John Dory, the first I ever tasted, which was very good indeed, though like some other famous things, not deserving (I think) the whole of its fame. 1806. Æt. 29.

I expect to reach London again on Thursday, or Friday at the farthest; which is a sad distance off, considering how much I have to do there.

Ever, my dear Mother,

Most affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER XCI. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, Truro, 4th Nov. 1806.

I have had a sort of contest and canvass for my seat, as you would probably learn from Jeffrey, to whom I wrote from St. Ives. The election was yesterday, and the numbers were, Stephens 135, Horner 128, Symes 93, Montgomery 86. We had several more double votes, but the gallant Colonels left us the field, before we brought down all our forces.

As I went my rounds among the fishermen and other independent electors of St. Ives, I amused myself with the idea how much you would have been amused at my expense; and also with the conscious pride of being most admirably adapted for some situations, where you are always pleased to say that I only expose my incapacity. I shook every individual voter by the hand, stinking with brine and pilchard juice, repeated the same smiles and cajoleries to every one of them, and kissed some women that were very pretty. I have laid such a foundation of popularity, and mean to raise so much upon it by my exertions against salt duties, and in favour of fish bounties, that

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I should not be surprised if I were to become the very Dagon of my constituents.

I am very anxious to learn what has been done in the Faculty of Advocates with respect to the new plans for the reform of the courts, and whether there is any likelihood of the discussion taking place in parliament early in the session. I wish very much to be prepared for it; and if I can make myself useful, to be so. But I must depend very much upon you for instruction. If a draft of the proposed bill is circulated at Edinburgh, lose no time in sending me a copy.

Most truly yours,
FRA. HORNER.

LETTER XCII. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, Temple, 19th Nov. 1806.

There can be no objection to your saying that you have read Kinnaird's letter to me; for nobody will ever censure me for my habit of keeping nothing secret from you that concerns me. Certainly, do not refuse to say to any one who asks the question, and is entitled to ask, that I am introduced into parliament by the friendship of Kinnaird. It is not a fact that admits of concealment, if that were desirable; but I see no more reason that it should be made a mystery of, than that it should be proclaimed. I would not have accepted the obligation, if I had not considered it as honourable to me, both in itself, and by the person who bestowed it. I owed it to no solicitation, but to his own free, and to me quite unexpected, generosity; and I shall on all occasions be ready to acknowledge my gratitude to him for so im-

portant a service, which on the part of a person, who has no political situation that requires adherents, I must consider as an instance of most disinterested munificence. I rely upon your knowledge of my views and feelings with regard to all the circumstances of this event in my life, and I trust to your kind, honest discretion for making them understood, as far as they need be, by those who wish me well. I know very well what doubts of some friends I have to clear away, and what predictions may be delivered by others whom I shall delight to disappoint. It will take my life-time, I believe, to establish that confidence, which it would give me such pleasure to possess; because I bring no birth-rights in my favour. But it is my temper very much to repose upon distant expectations, enjoying in the meanwhile the trust of one or two who have known me longest. I ought not to have said two. Pray pardon me for saying so much about myself.

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Ever affectionately yours,

Fra. Horner.

### Letter XCIII. FROM J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Horner, Edinburgh, 25th Nov. 1806.

I have time to write a very few lines, and inclination to say a great deal. I have already delayed too long telling you how entirely I agree with every sentiment you express in your last note. Kinnaird's letter does him much honour.

There is no circumstance in your life, my dear Horner, so enviable as the universal confidence which your conduct has produced among all descriptions of men. I do not speak of your friends, who have been

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close and near observers, but I have had some occasions of observing the impression which those who are distant spectators have had, and I believe there are few instances of any person of your age possessing the same character for independence and integrity—qualities for which very little credit is given in general to young men. I do not consider it as an accident or piece of good fortune your having had a seat in Parliament offered to you, upon the most independent footing. Without having any idea from what quarter it might come, it has been an event which I have for a long time looked forward to. Kinnaird has gained much in my estimation by the manner in which he has behaved upon the occasion. I shall resume my pen in the evening: in the meantime believe me,

Yours truly,

JOHN A. MURRAY.

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The new parliament met on the 15th of December, and was very short-lived. A change of Ministers took place on the 24th of March; parliament was prorogued on the 27th of April, and was immediately afterwards dissolved.

Mr. Horner took no part in any of the great questions that were debated; and is reported as having spoken twice only, and very shortly on both occasions. The first of these was on a motion of the Lord Advocate of Scotland, (the Hon. Henry Erskine) for leave to bring in a bill to suspend, for a limited time, the powers of the Court of Session to grant augmentations of the stipends of the clergy. In making the motion, he stated, that no less than a hundred and forty-nine suits for augmentation had commenced since July, 1806. Mr. Horner supported the motion; which he said was not brought forward in a spirit of

hostility to the Court of Session, but rather as a relief to them. He at the same time spoke in terms of high commendation of the clergy of Scotland, as distinguished for their piety; and said that their emoluments were very inadequate to their station and the duties they had to perform. 1806. Æt. 29.

On the 10th of February he was named as a member of a committee "to examine and consider what regulations and checks have been established, in order to control the several branches of the public expenditure;" and on the 24th of March, Mr. Bankes, as chairman of the committee, having moved—"That no office ought hereafter to be granted in reversion," Mr. Horner spoke in favour of the motion, and stated, that the subject had been the first to which the attention of the committee had been directed.*

At the general election, he did not obtain a seat; but in July following, by the friendship of Lord Carrington, he was elected for the borough of Wendover. Lord Mahon†, the son-in-law of Lord Carrington, had been chosen for Hull as well as for Wendover, and made his election for the former place.

The new parliament met on the 22d of June, and was prorogued on the 14th of August. Mr. Horner is not reported as having spoken on any occasion during the short period between his return and the prorogation.

* Hansard's Parliamentary Debates.

† The present Earl Stanhope.

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LETTER XCIV. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, The Temple, 25th Dec. 1806.*

I have scarcely had time to write for some days past, but there has not been much to tell you of. Lord Howick's speech† is reckoned the best he has ever made; so Tierney says, and I overheard Percival make the same remark. It seemed to me a speech of considerable ability, and parts of it were admirable in point of manner and sentiment; I particularly liked his account of Sir Home Popham, and his asserting the honour and discipline of the service, in defiance of the low manufacturing popularity with which that unscrupulous commander will be received. It is difficult to judge, from such a specimen as the moving an address, what powers Lamb‡ will have for debate; he has evidently the most striking manner and voice of any person that is yet known in the House. Your friend Canning made an able speech certainly, but a very injudicious one. It seemed a piece of personal ostentation; and perhaps a device to fix himself in the throne of Opposition, the settlement of which seems not yet regulated. I look upon it as a serious misfortune to the country, that it is for the present deprived of that important part of our political system; a party arrayed against the ministers, for the purposes of popular vigilance and inquisition, upon fixed and assignable principles.

Ever yours,
FRA. HORNER.

* Parliament met on the 15th of December.
† The present Earl Grey: debate upon the Address, 19th of December.
‡ The Hon. Wm. Lamb, the present Lord Melbourne.

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LETTER XCV. TO LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.

My dear Seymour, The Temple, 29th December, 1806.

You have ascribed my delay to the true cause; I projected a long and full letter. I take it very kind of you, whose occupations are quite as urgent and more important than mine, to have overlooked the punctilios so dear to letter-writers.

Our military arrangements remain still a very important subject of parliamentary discussion; though what is yet to be done rests more with the executive government, parliament having already furnished, in the way of plans and facilities, a great deal more than has been acted upon. The vigilant superintendence of the manner in which legislative measures are carried into execution, is no doubt an unceasing and imperious duty to the two Houses. I agree with you perfectly upon the subject of the Duke of York; and have always entertained an opinion, that the present ministers are not aware of their own strength in shrinking from a struggle upon that question, in which they would be supported very generally by the country, by all the best part of it, all but the most blind worshippers of the gracious sovereign. At the same time, it is not doing justice to the men now in power, to forget that, upon the military arrangements, they have introduced a most important innovation, in opposition to the Duke of York, the king, the court, the old staff, and all the tribes of retainers that depend upon these; and that they put to hazard their power and their places, though one or two among themselves, whom the public, or at least history, will hear of at some future period, were cowardly and corrupt enough to think of abandoning the ques-

1806. Æt. 29. tion. I am induced to mention this circumstance to *you*, that you may feel a little more confidence than I perceive you do, in the disposition of our present administration towards useful innovation. In the present session, I expect, as we saw in the last, they are much more likely to be opposed for innovating what is called too much, than for a contrary line of conduct. With respect to military affairs, my apprehensions take very much that turn; and the language I sometimes hear used by those who call for new and great measures, fills me with disquiet.

The sort of army, and the means of raising it, that some people want, would only be a less evil than conquest by a foreign invader; what I wish to see preserved from French subjugation, is not the physical England alone, with its two-footed inhabitants, but artificial England, the constitution, and that marvellous exception to all common experience,—the freedom of the people. I have a great confidence in the efficacy of this system to furnish the means of its own defence; and those persons who think the same sort of exertions and sacrifices necessary for us, as for the languid old monarchies of the Continent, overlook, it seems to me, both the advantages of insular situation, and the resources that grow out of the established habits and feelings of political liberty. The present ministers have difficulties which it will be the greatest of all glories to surmount; if they can steer their course with a firm hand, between the selfish prejudices of the court against improvements that touch its own immediate possession and abuses, and, on the other hand, the clamours of the frightened public for innovations, disproportioned to a temporary danger. To recur to first principles, is to resolve our complex machine of immunities and privileges into its two

simple elements of multitude and violence; and after deluding ourselves with the vision of a splendid military power, we should awake slaves in a camp. Depend upon it, the question is not so short as you have put it. 1806. Æt. 29.

My anxieties are fixed upon quite another subject from that which occupies your letter—Ireland; where there is the fairest and surest opportunity of doing good, not only against the present danger, but through all the succeeding ages of this country, and where there are the materials of unceasing agitation, perhaps of some fatal explosion, if that opportunity be neglected. Since the present administration came into power, they have adopted a new set of maxims for the government of that injured country, and have enforced them by including Catholics in their distribution of patronage, as well as by repressing, as much as possible, the hostile and malignant spirit of the Orangemen. While Mr. Fox lived, whose power the Catholics regarded as a pledge that as much would be done for them as was practicable, the continuance of this impartial and mild spirit of administration might have anticipated the effects of more decisive measures; but now, some of these are absolutely necessary, in order to renew a pledge which they lost by his death. It is something, that ministers have been able to crush the late disturbances, without stepping out of the forms of the law; and to my mind, this is a contrast with the proceedings of former governments, that would alone attach me to the present. But I am persuaded the time is now come, when that which ought to have been bestowed long ago, as an act of justice to that country, must be conceded as a precaution for our own security. You

1806. Æt. 29. know where the difficulty lies upon this subject; with our gracious sovereign again, and the bigots of the church establishment. Whether our ministers have determined any thing upon the subject, I do not know; I speak only of my own wishes and fears. I shall regard it as a fatal oversight, if another session of parliament shall pass away, without a most decisive measure being adopted with regard to the church revenues of Ireland, and the rights of Catholic subjects to rise in the army and the state.

I have not said a word about myself, and must delay that subject to another time. I cannot, however, delay any longer my thanks to you for the true kindness and friendship of your last letter, which I have read over very often. My views and resolutions with respect to my scheme of life, and plans of conduct, remain unaltered; I am not insensible of the dangers that surround me, nor unconscious of my failures in acting up to the principles which I have laid down. Yet I am not without hopes of executing the original design in some manner, however imperfect; and though I shall not accomplish a hundredth part of what six years ago I considered easily practicable for me, I do not yet yield up my confidence that that hundredth part will be of the kind, and in the sort, which six years ago, and steadily ever since, has been the object of my ambition. I have been far less industrious than I determined to be; fortune and accident have run infinitely more in my favour than I ever dreamt of. But both my diligence and my successes have tended to advance me towards my original object. Not that I have not often wavered, and for days been false to my purpose; but it has always rallied, and each time binds me faster to it. I will write more particularly to you very soon, and you

will allow me to remind you that you have promised me a letter about yourself. 1807. ÆT. 29.

Ever affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER XCVI. TO FRANCIS JEFFREY, ESQ.

My dear Jeffrey, Temple, 14th Jan. 1807.

I have been directing so many letters to you for other people, that I must have one now of my own. Not that I have much to say, but to desire you not to forget me quite, which I am sometimes afraid of.

Before you receive this, you will be delivered of your eighteenth birth; which I become curious to see, as I have heard nothing of its contents, except Allen's abstract of the Mercurio Peruviano, and Murray's Essay on the Judicial Reforms, both of which promise me much pleasure.

Have you any good subjects in view for your nineteenth? There are two I wish you, *yourself*, would undertake, if you can pick up books that would admit of them; they are political perhaps strictly, but there is no objection to them on the ground of party politics, from which you must ever abstain. The subjects I mean, are, the policy to be pursued with respect to the commerce of neutral nations, and with respect to the grievances of Ireland. Many well-disposed people are in error upon these two great questions, who would be set right, or at least cured of the dogmatism and clamour of their errors, by a candid, plain, and forcible exposition of the conduct that is recommended equally by prudence and by kindness. I do not want an elaborate argument of *right* about the

1807. Æt. 29. rule of 1756, nor an exhaustive disquisition upon all the points of the question of Catholic emancipation; but a perspicuous and pithy statement, drawn from the maxims of obvious policy and justice, which will satisfy honest thinkers, that the wild Irish ought not to pay a tithe of their potatoes, and that we ought not to aid and abet Napoleon in his plans for extirpating commerce and opulent industry. If you have given me the article I asked you for, upon the slave trade, it will come to London the week after next with most appropriate and beneficial effect.

I do not know whether I have given you a hint already, that I think Whishaw, now that he has more leisure, might be tempted to review, if you would invite him yourself, and instigate him by the means it would afford him of diffusing and strengthening just opinions. He would prove a valuable associate in some departments.

Ever most truly yours,

FRA. HORNER.

### LETTER XCVII. TO DR. ADAM.*

My dear Sir, The Temple, 31st Jan. 1807.

I have had the pleasure this morning of receiving your letter, respecting a Bill for the Relief of the Widows and Children of the Schoolmasters of Scotland. I am much gratified at being thought of by you in such a business, and shall most assuredly pay every attention to it, both because it is your wish, and on account of the propriety of the measure. From what you say, I expect to receive the draught of the bill in

* Rector of the High School, Edinburgh.

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the course of this day, and I shall wait on the Lord Advocate to-morrow, in order that it may be brought into the House without delay. At this moment, I am not able to say whether we can contrive to have it received as a public bill; I rather fear not; but as soon as I have ascertained this point, I will let you know.

I cannot help thanking you for employing me a little on a subject of this nature. You are active as ever in the best interests of knowledge and humanity; and I am vain enough to believe you intended a compliment to one of your school-boys, and supposed him worthy of seconding your endeavours. I often reflect with gratitude on the obligations I owe to you; and since I became a nearer spectator of affairs to which you always directed our curiosity, I feel the blessing of some early impressions, of which I was scarcely conscious at the time they were made.

I am ever, with much gratitude and respect,

Yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER XCVIII. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, London, 20th Feb. 1807.

We have a very interesting week before us in the House; the investigation of this ugly charge against Sheridan, the new clauses in the Mutiny Bill, and, introductory to the violent debates we are likely to have on the proposed benefit to Catholics, Percival's opposition to the annual grant of a small sum of money for the support of the Catholic college at Maynooth. These ministers have very nearly removed every doubt I ever suffered myself to entertain, with respect to

1807. Æt. 29. their determination to redeem all the pledges they formerly gave. I begin to exult a little over you about the Whigs, and shall be doubly armed for the argument in their defence when we meet. The Slave Trade, the Finance Committee, the Limited Service, and this commencement of wise and moderate justice to the Catholics, give me great confidence and great pleasure. We differ a little in our opinions of individuals connected with politics, from the different accidents of our intimacies; but on questions so large and so lasting as these, it has been one of the great delights of my life to think alike with you.

I begin to be ashamed of not having attempted yet to speak; perhaps these Catholic discussions will lay hold of me: but I shrink from it when it comes to the moment.

I am happy to think there is some chance of your coming to town this spring; it might be pleasant to yourself, and would be useful to us, if you were here while the Scotch Court Bill is in progress. You have put it upon me to determine for you, which I am averse to do, because I know not if I should be certain of enjoying your society so much as I should desire it. At present, I am almost separated from all my friends; and the Shrewsbury committee, which occupies almost the whole morning, may last a good while longer. Part of the year we must contrive to pass together; for I shall never think any year fully enjoyed, in which we have not met to compare our late impressions and renew our old conversations. The years begin to run off so rapidly, that we have few to lose. With a view to our arrangements, I must tell you, that I have determined to go the western circuit; I shall be at Winchester by the 6th of July, and shall be out near five weeks. From a part of Whitbread's

speech on the Poor Laws, you will perhaps have been led into an idea that I was consulted by him upon his plan; which was not in the least the case. I earned that unmerited panegyric by a short note, which I wrote for him one night after midnight, stating the present law of Scotland on the subject, about which he had asked me some questions.* I will send you his Bill, when I get it. 1807. ÆT. 29.

Ever affectionately yours,
FRA. HORNER.

LETTER XCIX. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, London, 6th April, 1807.

It is a week since I heard the place of Depute Advocate was to be offered to you, at the suggestion of Robert Dundas†; I had no doubt at all, that, in the circumstances under which this administration has been formed, and the views and principles which they are likely to act upon, you would decline the proposal without hesitation. No other course would have been consistent with that line of conduct, which you so steadily pursue, and which is, and has always been, the object of my most delighted observation.

I hope your idea of coming up now is not a substitute for the plan, with which I have been indulging myself most agreeably, of your meeting me on the

* In Mr. Whitbread's speech on the Poor Laws, on the 19th of February, he said: "Most of the information I have obtained on the subject of the Scottish law relating to the poor, I owe to an honourable member of this House (Mr. Horner), who has been well known in the republic of letters, and at the bar of Scotland; and who is sure to become an ornament of this assembly." (*Hansard's Debates*, vol. viii. p. 880.) — ED.

† The present Viscount Melville, then President of the Board of Control for the Affairs of India. A change of Ministers had taken place on the 24th of March. — ED.

1807. Æt. 29. western circuit; if it were, I would not give my consent to the change but with great reluctance. Hear me. William Adam* and I have taken each other, for better for worse, to journey the circuits together; we are to have a carriage for ourselves two, with a dickey for the joint clerk: the bodkin's seat is to be maintained unviolated, unless a person of the most choice conversation, not a lawyer going that circuit, should upon any occasion present himself. In other words, there is to be a spare seat kept for you. Can you refuse after this? We shall be at Winchester on the 5th of July, and so travel on for about five weeks through Cornwall round to Bristol. You might run to the south as soon as your session business was over, and join us soon enough to see the practice of the western circuit at two or three of the assize towns. I feel already a satisfactory repose from the irksome disappointments and personalities of those political intrigues, at the thoughts of having your conversation to myself in the warmth of summer and among the gardens of England. The circuit will set us down at Bristol on the borders of that country, which we have before projected to visit; and I could easily add a week to my absence from London. Now, if you come to town at this moment, I shall never see you comfortably; you will have a thousand Scotch relations to make parties with, a thousand Lords of Session to dine with at the British, a thousand routs and assemblies which you cannot refuse to go to. There are no debates worth coming ten miles to hear; there is not a speaker now, whom I would wait for two hours in the gallery. You see what a selfish view of the subject I take; were you to come both in spring and in summer, *à la bonne heure;* but you will not. And I

* See *antè*, p. 203.

have no pleasure in the year that passes over me, unless I have you for a while, quietly away from London, all to myself. Here I must stop for to-day. 1807. Æt. 29.

Affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER C. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, London, 7th April, 1807.

I thank you for the papers on the seat of Lords of Session in Parliament. I got Thomson's yesterday, and sent them immediately to Lauderdale; on whom they do not appear to have made a sufficient impression; I shall give him yours to-day.

I am much charmed with your decided expressions about the conduct of the late ministers. To be sure, no man of personal spirit, or who understands the constitution, can have a moment's doubt. The only part of the story I could have wished to be otherwise, is the withdrawing the Bill*, and not resigning at once; but perhaps it was rendered unavoidable in consequence of that misconception originally about the extent of the measure. And yet, had the king closed with that compromise, they would have remained in power with tarnished honour: as it ended in a resignation at last, the appearance of moderation, in yielding to the king, may do them good with the country, which takes these transactions with a coarse judgment. Nothing but the impatience of the king's advisers to get into power, or his own impatience to get rid of the reformers and abolitionists, perhaps the Duke of York's to stop the reformation of barrack abuses, could have so blinded a practised artist

* To enable Catholic officers to rise in the army and navy. — ED.

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in cabinet-making, like the king, as to make him overlook the advantage he would have gained, by keeping them, with their withdrawn bill, a little while longer in office, to be thrust out on the next opportunity.

Do not think of undertaking a long journey for the sake of hot rooms and late nights. The debates ought not to tempt you, and would not reward you. We are no longer in the heroic ages; though Sheridan has awoke from his dotage, to show us again something of what they were. Had the great discussions gone on that were in view, upon measures of general and lasting benefit to the country, the interest of the subjects would have made up for the mediocrity of the speakers; but those seem all vanished. All the prejudices that have been skulking out of sight, will be advanced into broad day, avowed in parliament, and acted upon in the cabinet; it will be the language of the treasury bench in the House of Commons, that the poor would be made worse subjects, and less comfortable to themselves, by letting them learn to read; the principles of toleration will be brought into question, and we shall have eternal chimes upon the wisdom of our ancestors and the danger of innovation. I will own a foolish secret to you: that I suffered more irritation from the sort of spirit and opinions that prevailed against Romilly's little bill*, than I have received in amusement from all my time in the House of Commons. There was something lost in the bill itself; but the symptoms that attended it were discouraging to every attempt of the sort in future.

* To make the freehold estates of persons who die indebted assets for the payment of their simple contract debts. (See Memoirs of Sir S. Romilly, 1st edition, vol. ii. pp. 173. 177. 180. 184. 186.) — Ed.

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Like other good citizens, I do not quite despair; so long as the press is free, and men will devote themselves to the labour of instructing the public mind, there must be some impression made more and more in favour of just opinions; and, perhaps, upon the subjects that now embarrass us the most, some blame may be imputed to a neglect of this duty, especially upon the state of Ireland, and the real nature of the Catholic claims. I say, I do not quite despair; but I am very near it. That these opinions in these particular applications of them, will finally be acknowledged to have been just and salutary, I believe with the faith of a fanatic, and that those who in these days contend for them will be classed in one of the lower orders of martyrs to liberty and justice.

All this is delightful, if I were still among my books, and enjoying an uncontrolled and ceaseless liberty of speculation. But when one sees how near these improvements are to our reach, how easily they might be reduced into possession (as the lawyers say), how congenial they would be to the English constitution, and what a hold we should have of them if once allied with its stability, it is more than one can bear without pain to find that the distance which appears so small is in reality so great; and that the best hopes of the wisest men and the best efforts of the bravest are frustrated by ignorance, imbecility, and the corrupt love of power that profits by them.

I understand that Bentham's tract on the Scotch Judicature Bill will be published very soon, and you shall have several copies of it sent down immediately by the coach. Whishaw, who has seen it, speaks rather indifferently of its merits; but it cannot fail to present judicious hints, for the consideration of those who will condescend to be more soberly practical in

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their reasonings. It is some satisfaction to me, that you and Jeffrey are converts to my opinion of his book on French judicature; which, like all his other treatises, contains many important observations which may be taken in the very state in which he has left them, but is still more valuable for its irresistible effect in setting the mind of the reader to work by the boldness and restlessness of the writer's speculations. It is the most effectual exercise in the art of legislative reasonings.

Ever most truly yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CI. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, Shrewsbury Committee, 8th April, 1807.

I send you a Morning Chronicle to-day, for the sake of an excellent song, and a still more excellent constitutional dissertation; try if you can guess the author of this last. You will perhaps find out a little paragraph in another part of the paper, which may amuse you in a different way, and which had almost prevented me from sending you the rest of it; though I own that would have been somewhat like affectation.* I may just explain to you, however, that this election is in pursuance of an intention a great deal older than my present factious state, and determined upon while I was yet lolling in the sunshine behind the Treasury benches; though it happened to be delayed from time to time till just before the change of ministers. The Whig Club is of very little use; but it is of a

* A notice of Mr. Horner having been elected a member of the Whig Club.

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little: it serves to keep together a number of very respectable Whigs, of the middle station of life, who reside in the counties near London; those from Kent are particularly respectable: it will serve, also, to give the memory and the name of Fox still an influence over the opinions and conduct of many persons of that description. You will think this very sad party-work; I confess it looks like it; it is not so much in reality with me as it seems: you shall be my judge.

I expect to have Bentham's tract for you in a day or two. Romilly has read it; and says there are a great many acute remarks in it, and a great many bad jokes.

To-morrow I hope to send you a "Short Account of a late short Administration," which I have printed in a three-penny pamphlet.* Harry Bennet had done it first, on the model of Burke's little account of the first Rockingham administration; he gave it me to alter; and I have, bit by bit, altered it nearly all. I wish I had written it originally in my own way; it would have been more uniform, the only merit such a thing can have.

But I must return back to my sessions law.

Ever yours affectionately,

FRA. HORNER.

### LETTER CII. TO LADY HOLLAND.

House of Commons, 15th April, Eleven o'clock.

None of the great ones have spoken yet on either side.† A great many new orators; the best on

* See Appendix C.

† Great debate on the motion of Mr. W. H. Lyttleton, "That this House, considering a firm and efficient administration as indispensably

1807. Æt. 29. the government benches, young Milnes of Yorkshire, who spoke very well. Lyttleton, not with too much of youthful diffidence, but with more effect and better taste than I expected. The best speech by far is Ward's*; you will set this down, of course, to partiality, but wait till to-morrow, and ask enemies, if there are any, as well as indifferent persons. I have always promised deep for him; but after what he has done to-night, I am ashamed of my imperfect sagacity in not promising a great deal more. Sir John Newport has been beating Castlereagh pretty hard; and Lord Holland will not be sorry to hear that the Union has been abused by Mr. Tighe. We are going to have a speech from Windham, if I can judge from appearances; he sits quite absorbed, and growls if any one disturbs him. I wish I could recollect more particulars, but I must go down to hear Tierney answer Bankes.

### Letter CIII. TO FRANCIS JEFFREY, ESQ.

My dear Jeffrey, Southampton, 5th June, 1807.

Your scolding letter about my never writing to you upon the affair of the Review, reached me the very day that I expected an answer to a very long letter I had sent to you upon that subject. If you have not received that, it is enough just to mention, that the course which I recommended, with the authority of Pigott, was at once to announce our desertion of the Edinburgh Review, and our intention of commencing immediately a new work of periodical criticism.

necessary in the present important crisis of public affairs, has seen, with the deepest regret, the late change in his Majesty's councils." The previous question was moved as an amendment, and was carried by 244 against 198, leaving a majority for the new administration of 46. — Ed.

* The Hon. J. W. Ward, afterwards Earl Dudley.

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Though, at former times, I have often wished you to relinquish the Review, and betake yourself to your profession, I hold it to be a wise point of honour not to be driven off the field in this way; it is now become a most useful channel for the circulation of liberal opinions very extensively among the higher and middling classes of the people of England; they would regret the loss of it very much, and we seem bound not to throw it up, until we have established for other persons, who might be disposed to continue it, the right and practicability of preserving its absolute independence of the booksellers.

I came down to this place two days ago, and am passing some idle time very agreeably with my friends from Holland House and Kinnaird's family. I return to London to-morrow evening, and shall be called to the bar early in the next week.* You tell me nothing of your plans for the summer, which I wish very much to know, that somehow, and somewhere or other, we may contrive to meet. I shall go the western circuit, which will keep me from London till the second week in August; the rest of that month and September I think I must spend in town, in order to attend the Carnatic commission; and October I have not yet disposed of.

Elmsley has promised me to send you some short article for the next number, of whatever Review it is to be called; so has Hallam; and I have been exhorting Allen to be just and generous to poor Jovellanos, and to take charge of a late publication of American state-papers between France and the States: he scruples about the last, but promises fair for the other. I have given over promising, you know; but I own the

* He was called to the bar by the Society of Lincoln's Inn, on the 12th of June.—Ed.

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only book I brought down with me is one about which I wish to write something. You must do the life of Kames, which is an excellent opportunity for you: grind yourself for it upon Thomson. There is a life of Hume too, with a discreditable name on the title-page; but the occasion should not be missed. There are some historical works lately printed in America, which, if you please, I will send you; and a continuation of Lacretelle's little history of the Revolution, which gives the period of the Directory.

You talk with great contempt of our solicitude about elections, and our financial inquiries; and would have us think of nothing but Bonaparte. My system is quite the contrary: foreign dangers are always in this country sufficiently exaggerated; besides that this one is, I am persuaded, transitory: on the other hand, the decay of liberty at home goes on by imperceptible steps, requires a constant vigilance, and all the little successes that we gain by that vigilance are immediately productive of others. I quite believe, however, in your prediction of a great victory over the Russians. You shall hear from me soon.

Ever yours,
FRA. HORNER.

### LETTER CIV. TO LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.

My dear Seymour, Temple, 6th July, 1807.

I had the pleasure of receiving your kind letter from Durham; in which you acknowledge so feelingly that the idleness of London was real enjoyment. I have protracted it for myself beyond your departure, though not in such excess, as when I had your midnight or morning company to the Strand.

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I have been talking a great deal about you with Mrs. Spencer, and with Miss Crewe too; and though at the risk of indulging your vanity, I must tell you that the latter amiable and excellent person spoke of that famous night conversation after Vauxhall, amidst all the festivities of Wimbledon on Saturday; if you had known what that scene was to be, you would have stopped in London a week for it, *as a study*, where all the beauties in living and still nature were united with all the refinements of polished society, in one immense luxury. I shall tell you no more particulars of it than this, that in one of the most wooded and extensive points of view in the park, there was a small tent pitched, away from all the rest, and out of hearing of the Pandeans, in which dined the two ladies I have already named, Windham, Ward, Sharp, and myself; I think you would have been of this party.

I was provoked at not seeing you once more before you left town; I had left some things I wished to say, to the last. The drawing is placed at length upon my wall*, and gives me a shadow of company at breakfast, by recalling many of the most valuable hours of my life, and bringing upon me, by its associations, that temper of mind in which I am both calmer and more aspiring than at any other moment. I have likewise to thank you for the book you left for me; Jacob Vanderlint's name was your attraction of course.

You have not yet given me the note of Alison's little scheme of Friendly Societies, which you said you would write down. Give me the outline first, before you find him at leisure to fill it up. These discus-

* A portrait of Lord Webb Seymour, by Henning, now in my possession. See Appendix A. — Ed.

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sions will be revived immediately by Whitbread, probably without leading to any result this session; but the attention of the public must be kept up, and I have no doubt we shall see some good done, if the king's conscience and Bonaparte do not settle the whole matter.

Though the official details are not yet arrived of the last affair in Poland, no reasonable person seems to entertain any hope of its being short of decisive. What course will the conqueror take next? To the south-east of Europe, or to Ireland? At all events, he will probably give advantageous terms to the Northern powers whom he has subdued, and will march back an army to Boulogne. We shall have the autumnal alarm of invasion, with more of likelihood and a nearer approach to reality than we have yet known it.

Since you left us, Malthus* has been a day or two in town; and gave me a little of his society, enough to enable me to judge of him; and I am happy to say, that a more philosophic candour, calm love of truth, and ingenious turn for speculation in his important branch, I have seldom met with. It is quite delightful to find, how closely he has taught himself to examine the circumstances of the lower classes of society, and what a scientific turn he gives the subject. There is a new speculation of his, about the importance of the people being fed dear, which I wish you were here to discuss; it has the look of a paradox, and, like most of his views, is revolting to the common belief; but I have not yet detected the fallacy, if there is one. I will explain it to you in my next letter. Ever most affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

* The Rev. T. R. Malthus.

LETTER CV. TO JOHN ALLEN, ESQ.

Dear Allen, Ragland, 19th August, 1807.

I received the letter you were so good as to write to me, when I was in Cornwall; our circuit was not concluded till the day before yesterday, and I am come into this fine part of the country, with Murray, for a few days. You will think us, though idle enough, not ill employed, when I tell you that yesterday morning I visited, with becoming veneration, the prison of the regicide Harry Martin, and that I am just returned from a survey of the castle of the Marquis of Worcester, which was demolished by the army of the parliament. There is a field about a mile off, which is called the *Leaguer*, and must from that name have been Fairfax's encampment; though the people can give no reason for the name, and, like the common people every where in England that I have seen, have not the least curiosity or tradition about the history of their country. It is not so with the descendants of the Covenanters.

I am very much satisfied in every respect with the circuit, and have found it a pleasant sort of party, though I should have gained more instruction from it if I had set out with a larger stock of legal knowledge, particularly in pleading. I never had seen so much of trials by jury before; and all I have now seen increases very much my admiration of the precision, sureness, and dispatch of that mode of trial. It is evident, however, that the establishment is too narrow for the business of the country. At Exeter, for instance, several causes were left, which the judge could not overtake; important causes of real property, and which must remain till the judges come round

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again. This is evidently a grievous defect in the system.

I have heard but little of the news lately, and very imperfectly; being reduced to the Morning Chronicle, and not receiving that very regularly. There have been some speeches in the House which I should like to have heard, and indeed some divisions at which I wish I had been present. Not even Grattan's authority, or that of the late administration, would have prevailed upon me to vote for that Insurrection Bill, with the clauses it contains; which seem worthy of Charles the Second's Scotch parliament. Can you explain to me Grattan's conduct, which appears so repugnant to the system of all his former principles? It is idle to talk of a necessity now, as different from what was urged formerly, and seemed then no justification of tyranny, or to talk of any necessity as justifying measures of that sort, which must perpetuate all the evils of discontent, if they do not bring them indeed to a crisis. Grattan's former conduct appears so uniformly excellent, and his view of the late Bill so inconsistent, that I am very anxious to understand his conduct.

Yours very truly,
FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CVI. TO HIS SISTER, MISS HORNER, LONDON.*

My dear Fanny, Crickhowel, 21st August, 1807.

The last account I gave of myself was from Clifton; since that, Murray and I have come by way of Chepstow and Abergavenny to this pretty village

* Now Mrs. Byrne: she married, after her brother's death, Miles Byrne, lieut. col. commandant of the 56th regiment of French infantry, and officer of the Legion of Honour.

of Crickhowel, which is just within Wales, upon the borders of Brecknockshire. We do not mean to go any farther, but have taken lodgings for four or five days, till we turn eastward again to London. 1807. Æt. 30.

The situation of this village is at the head of a pass leading from Abergavenny into the mountainous country, and five or six beautiful valleys, stretching into that country in various directions, end and meet here. They are more green than any thing that is to be seen to the east of Somersetshire; and the uplands are inclosed and cultivated almost to the top of the hills. The sides are covered with little farm houses and their orchards, and very small patches of wheat; and every field almost has a footpath. I am very apt to think the last beautiful country I have seen the most beautiful I ever saw; so that you cannot rely very much upon my choice; that, however, is my present way of thinking. We wanted a place to be quiet for a short time, and we seem to have pitched upon this one, fortunately. Our plan is this; we go out to walk about one o'clock in the day, spending a long morning (for we get up rather early) in a long breakfast, and getting through some business about the plans for reforming the Court of Session; we return to dinner before it becomes dark, usually about an hour and a half after the time we ordered, lest we should acquire any rural habits of punctuality; and, after dining as well as we can in all respects, contrive to get another walk before going to bed. We dine at a little inn, where there is a ball-room however, as there is everywhere in this part of the world; our lodgings are with an old dapper gentleman, the tax-gatherer (I believe), quite a character, addicted from his youth upwards to angling and music.

1807. Æt. 30. From Chepstow we took a walk up to Tintern Abbey, and back by the other side of the river. It is described in so many books that I will say nothing about it, except that it deserves all its fame. Ragland Castle, between Chepstow and Abergavenny, is the finest ruin of a dwelling-house I have ever seen; being comparatively modern, built about the time of Henry VII. I believe. It was demolished in the civil wars; and I fancy you will find a good deal about it in Clarendon, which you are still reading I suppose. At Abergavenny, I sent for a harper, who played very well; but he had quite as many of Gow's reels as Welsh tunes, and did not seem to know the one very well from the other. I asked him for Sir W. Wynne's March, but he did not please me half so much as you do. At Abergavenny there is a very curious old church, full of monuments; it is as old as the time of king Stephen. We shall go to Monmouth on Tuesday evening, where I shall find many letters I hope. The following day we shall spend upon the Wye, and, after seeing Berkeley Castle, propose to sleep at Chippenham or Malmsbury on Thursday. We have offered to dine with Sydney Smith on Friday, so that on Sunday or Monday at farthest I shall make my appearance.

Yours affectionately,
FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CVII. TO JOHN ALLEN, ESQ.

My dear Allen, Temple, 31st August, 1807.

I am very anxious to remove immediately all thoughts from your mind that I entertain, or ever for a moment entertained, any suspicions of Grattan's *integrity*. On the contrary, all I have observed

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either of his public conduct or character since he came into England, has strengthened into most complete conviction an opinion I had formed of him from his transactions in Ireland, as one of the few men of great talent in our day that have proved perfectly honest and pure in politics. I certainly regret very much and condemn the language he held, and the votes he gave upon the late Insurrection Bill; and nothing that I can imagine seems to me a sufficient explanation of such an inconsistency with the whole tenor of his former conduct.

Nothing yet of the Danish expedition: the delay is very much à la Duckworth. Sir William Scott is said to have furnished ministers with his opinion in favour of our right to search ships of war for deserters; such an opinion must be against all precedent, as well as all principle in the law of nations.

Ever yours,

FRA. HORNER.

### LETTER CVIII. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, Russell Square, 29th Sept. 1807.

I trust that several days before you receive this you will have arrived in George Street, and have found your family quite well.

I have made up my mind upon this Copenhagen business; you will think it strange, perhaps, that I had it to make up. But I expressly put myself into doubts upon the subject, and endeavoured for a while to view it as one of the extreme cases of that necessity which has no law. I am returned from every deviation that I attempted into the intricacies of state expediency to the daylight of common justice and old rules. It was an unwise measure even for the

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purposes of the actual war; with any prospect of future character, or of future wars by sea, this impolicy becomes still more apparent; and then it is, beyond even all the proceedings of the Convention or the Directory or Bonaparte against neutral nations, a violation of the laws by which the society of the human race is preserved. Sir William Scott, however, told Sydney Smith that no *principle* is more *plainly* laid down than our right to take the navy of the Danes; and so he has been ready to say, and would be still ready, for any outrage or breach of the law of nations that the Government of this country has dared or is meditating to commit. What say your philosophers at Edinburgh upon this occasion? I do not mean your political sceptics, who can take the theme on either side, and look upon these miseries and deeds of violence as so much sport upon a large scale for their reasoning appetite, and as so many favourable instances for their theory of indifference; but your graver and more terrestrial spirits, who consider that it is practicable to make the world a little more habitable, by taking some pains about it, and that it is their duty, even for the sake of rendering it a very little more secure and agreeable, to contrive useful rules, and exert their talents in persuading the multitude to observe them. I have here broken off to an old grievance; it is not unnatural, when one sees how fast the barriers and bulwarks raised by former wisdom are sinking, to regret that the genius given to the world is not diligently employed to uphold them.

Write to me often, my dear Murray; one has no pleasure in dwelling upon any public subjects, while the liberties and wealth of England are mouldering away, and the institutions of Europe stiffening into

barbarism; but the gratifications of private affection are untouched by these revolutions, and though they give a sadder cast to one's conversation, they cannot impair our confidence and freedom. Direct my letters always to the Temple; and be sure I never enjoy a letter more than when I am out of London. I go down to Bradley* on Thursday, and from that to the sessions at Taunton; I have promised Petty, who was in town yesterday, to go back to Bradley for a day or two with him; and then a visit of a week at Woolbeding† will close my wanderings for this summer.

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Ever truly yours,
FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CIX. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, Temple, 18th Nov. 1807.

I am quite ashamed of my long silence; and the more so, because I have much to tell you of in various ways. Yet it must not be to-day; for I am staying at home from Westminster Hall, where I ought to be, in order to draw up a memoir, in a case of military inquiry, with respect to the conduct of a general officer. I shall only tell you for the present, that I have prescribed to myself a regular forensic life, and find myself conforming to it with passable cheerfulness and assiduity. Till the meeting of Parliament, I shall make Russell Square‡ my bed and board; but I come to chambers regularly in the evening, and having made a rule to dine out only on tailors' holidays, I have already brought myself to

* The Duke of Somerset's.
† Lord Robert Spencer's.
‡ His father's house.

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FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CX. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

Friday, 4th Dec. 1807.

Indeed, my dear Murray, if it were only for the sake of the argument, you shall not inveigle me to say that trial by jury is either the *most* perfect or *a* perfect institution. If you caught me in such expressions, in any of those morose fits of dogmatism which occasionally come upon me, when I have not activity to grapple with my companions' mortifying ingenuity, I now must humbly beg leave to recall them. I am not only however still of the same opinion, as to the *comparative* excellence of that machine, for doing the business of the law, but am growing daily to rate its superiority still higher than I did before. I have always owned to you that I find myself at a loss in explaining the reasons of this excellence, and that I am not satisfied that I could make out a strict deduction from principle upon the subject: although the importance of effecting a separation, wherever it is practicable, betwixt the facts that are proved in a cause and the rule of justice that is to be applied to them, would be the first step of my theory, if I had time to give it form. I should then proceed to proofs from experience, of the failure of all other attempts that have been made, in England or elsewhere, to effect and secure this separation, except by the clumsy, apparently inartificial and rude contrivance of a jury. Whether the purpose might not be better answered,

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by a permanent sort of jury, composed of persons systematically educated to the art of trying facts, and rendered skilful in evidence by accurate study of the rules, and by constant practice; or, upon a different supposition, by such a structure of the record in a cause as would force the court to arrive at its decree by two distinct steps of judgment, one upon the facts, and another upon the law: this is an inquiry which it would be extremely valuable to prosecute, and I wish some country, that can afford to try experiments, would make this one. I have said that my opinion upon juries is becoming still more fixed; and I mean, since we parted. You will call it my prejudice.

The management of a question upon the poor's-rate acts, by his Majesty's justices of the peace at their Quarter Sessions, gives one what Lord Bacon and Lord Webb would call an instance of the extreme case, against the judicial composition of law and fact. The nicest and most evanescent questions of law are apt to be started upon the construction of those statutes, and frequently the point must be taken upon a mass of intricate evidence; and you do not require to have it described, what the worthy gentlemen of the quorum do with such difficulties. I will grant you a large allowance of natural hereditary dulness, and of habits that do not much sharpen the wit, but you cannot get rid of my instance entirely by that explanation. In the trial of indictments by the Sessions, a jury is interposed; and the chairman seemed to me to acquit himself much better with that assistance. But I do not mean to rest upon that. From the Quarter Sessions I come up to the Court of Chancery; where we have a judge long practised in all the varieties of legal procedure. We have lately had some very

1807. Æt. 30. elaborate judgments delivered by Lord Eldon upon suits which called for the interposition of the peculiar rules and maxims of the Court, upon circumstantial proof of fraud and undue influence; and in listening to them I learned nothing very clear and distinct, but the importance of giving separate judgments upon the facts and the rule, and the necessity of resorting to contrivances of form and system, in order to insure that separation. I look upon the Court of Chancery and the Quarter Sessions, as affording in this view counterpart instances, each of which fortifies the conclusion I would draw from the other.

The proceedings of election committees of the House of Commons, and those of the House of Lords, when it sits not as a court of error, but judging, either originally or by appeal, of the fact as well as law, would supply me with confirmations of the same argument, which I push no farther, however, than this, that it is the result of the experience of England upon the subject; not very enlightened at any time I own, not managed with any view to a decision of the question now between us, and suggesting nothing like a reason against trying other modes of attaining the same object; but proving, I think, that the administration of law is not likely to be conducted upon a system of certain and clear rules, except where the separation of law and fact is, by some means or other, secured.

There is among the State Trials, that of Lord Mohun for the murder of Mountford*, quite a dramatic example of the confusion which may overcome the most exalted heads, when they are called upon to take, what I remember hearing Lord

* Before the House of Lords, Jan. 31. 1692: Howell's State Trials, vol. xii. p. 949.

Meadowbank* upon the bench say he always liked to take, a complex view of the case. You will not find it difficult, it seems to me, to guess what Lord Holt and Somers would have said, upon our subject, if we had caught them on their way from the Court of the Lord High Steward. 1808. Æt. 30.

My dear Murray, I intended to write a few lines, because I would not send William's note without saying a little myself; and here is something as long and dull as a dissertation. I have thrown out these points very hastily, and without much previous consideration, to have the advantage of your discussion of them.

Ever yours, most affectionately,

FRA. HORNER.

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Parliament met on the 21st of January, and the session continued to the 4th of July. Although Mr. Horner did not take a prominent part in any of the greater subjects which came under discussion, he took a more active share in the public business than he had done in the preceding session, and spoke upon several minor questions.

On the 25th of January, Mr. Bankes, as chairman of a committee that had been appointed to inquire into the subject of offices in reversion, moved for leave to bring in a bill to prevent the granting of offices in reversion†; and Mr. William Dundas having on that occasion stated that, "When the abolition of offices, and the limitation of the prerogative of the Crown with respect to them, were talked of, he could

* One of the Judges of the Court of Session.

† See the proceedings on the same subject on the 24th March, 1807, page 385.

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not help recollecting the instance of a distinguished character in that House, he meant the late Mr. Burke, who had been most active in the early part of his political career in reforming and abolishing offices, and in limiting the prerogative of the Crown, and who lived to lament and condemn all those reforms, abolitions, and limitations," Mr. Horner defended the memory of Mr. Burke:—"He rose," he said, "for the purpose of repelling the aspersions which had been thrown upon the memory of one of the proudest ornaments of this or any other country, by the inconsiderate observations of the right hon. gentleman. He denied that the latter part of Mr. Burke's life went in any way to invalidate or contradict the sincerity of his earlier efforts. Those who were honoured with that great man's friendship, or those who were acquainted with his very last work, knew that he took honour and credit to himself, for having pursued such measures as tended to every species of economical reform; they knew that to the latest hour of his splendid career, he was as zealous and as sincere an enemy to rapine and public malversation, as he was in the most vigorous period of his memorable life. He thought this measure the more valuable, not because it bore upon the prerogative of the crown, but because it was a measure of reform; and that, perhaps, was the very reason of the right hon. gentleman's opposition to it."*

* Mr. Horner never published any of his speeches in parliament, and, except on two occasions that will be noticed in the sequel, he does not appear to have corrected the report of any one. Those which are referred to, or given at length, in the present work, have been taken from Hansard's Debates; in most instances these reports are very brief, and convey little more than the general scope and line of argument of the speech. — Ed.

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LETTER CXI. TO FRANCIS JEFFREY, ESQ.

My dear Jeffrey, The Temple, 17th February, 1808.

There is no chance (I fear) of my being able to write any thing for you next time, because the whole month of March I shall be riding the circuit, and till I set out I have my hands full. If I can meet with any person whom I can induce to assist you, and who is worthy of being admitted by you as an auxiliary, I will not forget your necessities. Since Malthus has begun to contribute, I hope it will not be for want of solicitation on your part, if he does not continue to supply you with articles. Of all subjects, political economy is at present the most productive of useful publications, and though his general views are sometimes imperfect, he is always candid, and an advocate for what he believes to be most liberal and generous. You are good enough to ask me to recommend some subjects to you; I have long been a truant from literature, and find very little leisure to read any thing but black-letter and parliamentary accounts. But I will try to recollect some of your omissions, which ought to be supplied.

There is Horne Tooke's work on language, of which we talked long ago; a very fit subject for yourself, not because you have the learning that some would think indispensable, but because what is in truth required for improving that speculation is a more enlarged knowledge of metaphysics, and of the relations of the different sciences, than the acute inventor is himself possessed of. Dr. Jamieson's new work on etymology would give occasion for quite a different sort of dissertation; not on the philosophy of grammar, but on the actual his-

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tory of the languages of Europe, with many curious illustrations of the philosophical history of manners and customs among the common people. The traditionary preservation of so many catholic, and even the most ancient pagan, rites of superstition among the children and old women of your presbyterian country, is very whimsical, and must be very mortifying to the serious and feeble.

The mention of the Presbyterians puts me in mind of a book, which I read last summer, and which has not been reviewed yet; the Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson, one of Charles the First's judges, by his widow. It is a composition of much merit in various respects, and would give you an excellent opportunity for that characteristic criticism, which you ought to be very vain of; the personages who play what they thought a most important part in that day, are brought forward with strong effect; and the fanaticism of the times exhibited so far in a new light, that you see it in alliance with elegance of manners and accomplishments, mitigated by them, and corrupting them. If you could review Mrs. Hutchinson without quizzing her, which I rather doubt, you might give a very gratifying and useful impression, of the practicability of accommodating even to the sternest times of civil war, the same domestic virtues, and the same love of letters and the arts, which thrive best, no doubt, in tranquillity. I do not mean that those times are coming to us; *we* shall live on in the tranquillity of a vulgar servitude and degeneracy. In the spring you will have many fine subjects; Campbell, I am told by his friends Richardson and Charles Bell, has written a charming poem of narrative and description; and Scott, of course, will be very vehement with irregular success. I hope you will review them with your own hand;

nobody else has written a sentence of literature in the Edinburgh Review that can be endured. 1808. Æt. 30.

I shall mention Buchanan's project to Mr. Windham, who inquired of me the other day if I knew any thing about him. Encourage him by all means to try the experiment, at least, of a newspaper in Scotland; though I doubt very much whether your advice of mere impartiality will help him to a better sale, than his own propensities of Whiggism. The latter has but a poor chance in Scotland, and the former none any where. The man had better be left to his own opinions and inclinations; for he will give them more warmth and force, than if he writes impartially upon system: a heavy monotonous fairness is the last thing that people will read in their newspaper. People read it to get their daily opinions and impressions; it is now a necessary of life, especially in the country towns; and a man feels himself as awkward if he walks out without his political creed for the day, as if he wanted his breakfast. Newspapers are a new means of influence to government in England; and no set of ministers ever understood this more practically, than the present; their indefatigable, systematic attention to the daily press is quite admirable: and the persevering activity with which the most palpable lies, the most atrocious calumnies and misrepresentations are circulated and repeated, after every refutation, is irresistible. Nothing ever equalled them, but the *littérateurs* of the French Revolution. It sometimes strikes me as quite ludicrous, to see the scrupulous, indolent leaders of our half-combined party, make a few feeble efforts to oppose this torrent, by good writing and virtuous indignation.

I had some thoughts of saying something about politics before I ended this letter; but I have no time,

1808. ÆT. 30. and in truth little inclination. It is a subject in which all the interest I now feel partakes of dejection and disgust. I have no fears, like you, about conquest; but I see the progress of a base servitude so rapid, and the degeneracy of the laws and constitution is now so sensible, that I despair of any good being done by any exertion.

It was very kind to write to me; pray let me hear from you again very soon.

Affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CXII. TO JOHN ALLEN, ESQ.

Dear Allen, Wells, Thursday, April, 1808.

I thank you very much for your letter yesterday; not more for the information concerning the characters of the men brought into power by this revolution, than for the fit of hope which you have given me, that it may possibly lead to good. It is a doubtful and hazardous course, however, which the Duc d'Infantado has adopted for restoring liberty to his country, by the assistance of such invaders as the French troops are in the present age. And perhaps the hazard and uncertainty lie chiefly in this, that the further steps of such a course require harder and coarser virtues than usually belong to such a character as you describe the Duc d'Infantado's to be. As far as the individual is concerned, the success would be so glorious, as to be worth every chance and danger; and there have been so few moments lately, when one could find a pretext for indulging any hopes about the politics of the world, that I find it very agreeable to fall in with your sanguine expectations. It is so

pleasant to dream again. I shall leave this place to-night, and hope to have the pleasure of seeing you in a day or two. 1808. Æt. 30.

Ever yours,
FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CXIII. TO JAMES LOCH, ESQ.

My dear Loch, Temple, June 13. 1808.

In consequence of my being in the country, and my letters following me there and back again, I did not receive those you have written to me lately in their proper order. Two of them I have only now received, and the other yesterday. I was down in Buckinghamshire with Abercromby, at Lord Carrington's; and for four blessed days we were as idle in the open air, as it was possible for two men to be.

I wish you would let me know *to whom* the King made that notable remark about Mr. Fox's slovenliness in writing notes. Your conviction that this was said in order to give a tone to the court about the book*, is a pleasant instance of the refinement you philosophers are fond of, in imputing profound motives to the most insignificant actions of great people. And yet you may be right. I rather think, that the tone of the courtiers is that of contempt for so flimsy and slovenly a performance; and, in the present circumstances, I am neither surprised nor sorry that they have taken this turn. The attachment to principles and examples of public liberty is so dead in this country, and even the recollection of the old sentiments and sounds of the English language in that

* Mr. Fox's History of the early part of the Reign of James the Second, published this year.

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cause is so slight, that it is very natural for better people than the courtiers to regard a piece, which breathes the very ardour of youth about freedom and justice, as belonging to some remote age or country, and having nothing to do with present interests or present purposes. This is my reason for not being surprised. And, very much from the same view of the present state of public opinion, I am rather glad, that the church and the Tories do not seem to think it worth while to raise a cry against the book; if it were to be stigmatised now as a mere party pamphlet, which would be a plausible criticism, an impression might be given which would last a long while; whereas, if it is suffered to get into every library, and considered, for the present, as curious from the fame of its author, rather than for its own merits, and as the fragment of a history of antiquated times, the day may once more return, when its immortal doctrines will be cherished even in England, and the style will be admired as a singular, but not perfectly successful effort, to recur to the purity of English writing, from the false taste and affectation of the age.

I quite enter into your enthusiasm about Spain, and, in spite of Abercromby, whose calmer and colder judgment is an excellent bridle upon one's sanguine expectations, I have been dreaming wild in the same train of ideas. To speak as coldly as I can upon the subject, I have not any strong hopes of success, even if the circumstances be made the most of, and assisted or guided in the most judicious manner. But, whatever the result may be, I cannot but rejoice that a people, who bear such a name as the Spaniards, should make a struggle, at least, for their independence; the example cannot be otherwise than beneficial, even if they should entirely fail, to their posterity at some future day, and to all the rest of mankind. It is the

most detestable of all the enormities into which Bonaparte's love of dominion has plunged him; and more completely devoid, than any other, of all pretence of provocation or security. If I were a Spaniard, I should consider resistance, however desperate in its chances of success, and however bloody in its immediate operation, as an indispensable duty of discretion and expediency; to put the proposition in its most frigid form of expression. 1808. Æt. 30.

What the mode of our assistance from England should be, is quite another question. To judge of it in detail, would require more information than I have been able to gather concerning the real state of affairs in Spain. But my general principle would be, to make at once a cessation of all hostilities, and to declare to the Spanish nation, or to any provisional government which the insurgents may establish, that we renounce all projects against their colonies, as well as all views whatever of dismemberment or partition of any part of their dominion; that so long as they can maintain the struggle against France, they shall have the most cordial support, and supplies of all that is necessary. Indirect aid, I imagine, would be the best; that is, money, arms, provisions, &c.; for if the thing is to be accomplished, it is not by regular war, but by a protracted defence of the fastnesses of the country, and by the valour and perseverance of the Spaniards themselves. What a moment for a Spaniard of political and military genius!

I must take another time to answer your queries about hydrosulphurets; for I am afraid of being too late for Sheridan's notice about Spain. Nobody could tell me yesterday what he was to do, except that it was something in concert with Canning.

Yours ever affectionately,

FRA. HORNER.

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LETTER CXIV. TO FRANCIS JEFFREY, ESQ.

My dear Jeffrey, Temple, 15th June, 1808.

The long interruption of our correspondence, on my side, did not proceed from the motive which you have assigned to it, and was not in any degree designed; but was the consequence of the little leisure which is left me, and the difficulty I find in sitting down to write, except upon the spur of a letter just received. This proceeds much more from my bad economy of time, than from any thing exclusive in my other occupations.

I will not accept your flattering and tempting offer to review Mr. Fox's book. It must be done with more *habileté* than I have, and with greater impartiality too than I should be able to observe. Will you let me ask it, as a favour to *me*, that you will do it yourself with some pains, and more than usual care. It is rather important for the Review, that this should be a distinguished article; and it is more important, for all good interests in England, that that work should be received with a proper impression. I have been collecting some observations and criticisms, which I will write out and send to you, as materials *pour servir*, if you will make use of them. It is not all mere admiration. I am going to read the book once more, and will send you my remarks in a few days.

Faithfully yours,
FRA. HORNER.

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Æt. 30.

LETTER CXV. TO JAMES LOCH, ESQ.

My dear Loch, Old Down, July 8. 1808.

Spain! Spain! I am in a fever till I hear more about Dupont and the passes of the Sierra Morena. It will be desperate, if they have failed in their first resistance, under favourable circumstances, in the very sort of war upon which all their hopes must rely.

Till we hear how they will bear to be blooded; how they can maintain themselves after want of success; it is hard to judge of the event. It is quite a new experiment, in which the powers are for the first time to be tried of a vast regular army, and an enthusiastic people. The circumstances are very favourable on both sides; this is indeed the very crisis of the fate of Europe, and the event (either way) will perhaps be the most decisive test of the genius and effects of the French Revolution. The one result would revive our original persuasion, in its first ardour, that the people are not to be subdued by foreign troops, unless the love of their country is lost in a contempt of their government. The other would sink me in final despair of ever living to see prosperity or liberty again in any part of Europe, or even of descrying, at any distance, the prospect of their return. For even the military empire might last ages, before its discipline degenerated; and ages more of darkness and idleness might protract the shame and misery of Europe. Suppose all this to take place, are you prophet enough to look beyond such an abyss? Will the Tartars once more over-run the West? Is there a circulation in the peopling and civilising of the world, an alternation like those

1808. Æt. 31. which prevail in its physical history; so that Europe is to oscillate from feudal institutions to military monarchy, and to catch only a short interval of laws and refinement, while it is passing from the one condition into the other? And shall we have future theories of the moral history of the earth, like Hutton's system of its changes upon the surface, tracing back many former transitions from civilisation to barbarism, and presenting, in the future prospect, an endless, irksome succession of the same changes?

Ever yours affectionately,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CXVI. TO HENRY HALLAM, ESQ.

My dear Hallam, Wells, 24th August, 1808.

I found your letter to-day upon my arrival; it had gone in quest of me to Bodmin.

The news from Spain for the last fortnight has been admirable indeed; much beyond my expectations, both in respect of the success itself, and of the prudence by which it has been secured. But it makes one quite nervous to reflect, how much more prudence will for a long course of time be required, how much wisdom, too, both military and civil, and (what is the most fearful condition of all) how great a stock of genuine active patriotism, in order to accomplish entirely, and permanently secure, the vast scheme which the Spaniards have before them.

Like you, I have been reading a little in the language of the country which we have been all thinking of so much; but the summer circuit does not, without more self-denial than I have, allow much time for any regular study. I brought with me that memoir of Jovellanos,

which, you may remember, was praised in one of Allen's articles in the Edinburgh Review, as worthy of Turgot's pen. It contains many valuable details of the agricultural economy of Spain, and is perfectly of the liberal and enlightened school, in all general doctrines, with the exception of one grand error upon the corn trade; for he is elaborately against exportation being permitted. The language is very perspicuous, and sometimes elegant; formed upon the model of what the French used to call their academic style. I have read so little Spanish before this, as hardly to be ready to say whether I agree with you or not, in condemning even the little time that it requires to learn it as wasted. I remember being very much struck with the spirit and magnificence of some ancient ballads, which Lord Holland showed me in a collection called Romancero, and the little I read once of Zurita, the historian of Arragon, gave me a desire to have leisure to read him all through; indeed, I believe there are other pieces of history, written while Spain had constitutions in actual operation, that would be well worth studying, for the sentiments with which they are composed, as well as for the information to be collected respecting the history of popular and representative government in modern Europe. I should expect also to find the original narratives of the discoverers and conquerors of the New World extremely worth perusing in their own language. The extracts which Robertson gives from the letters of Cortes are excellent; and even in the translation, the story of Bernal Diez has a very original and characteristic cast.

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Have you seen the pamphlet of which I have been reading extracts in the Morning Chronicle, called "A plain statement of the conduct of the Ministry and

1808. Æt. 31. the Opposition towards his Royal Highness the Duke of York," and supposed to be published under his orders? If it have really that authority, I shall bind one forthwith with Burke's Causes of the Discontents; for if it has the Duke's sanction, it must have a still higher permission. And it would be indeed a very bold, but I do not for that conceive it a less likely step, that in the extreme weakness of his old age, (but to be sure when all the men of genius who kept him at bay are no more,) he should at length expressly avow, what has been so uniformly charged against him, and constantly denied; the existence of a "domestic party — a kind of closet and family council, whom the monarch may occasionally interpose between even his ministry and himself." These are the words of the pamphlet. If it comes really from the court, this publication marks a new era in the history of our constitution.

I beg you will present my best regards to Mrs. Hallam, and believe me ever very truly yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CXVII. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, The Temple, 16th September, 1806.

I am afraid you have set me down as a very unkind one, for my long silence. I do not know how it has happened, except that I have been meditating several long letters on several different topics, and that in the course of the circuit I never found an interval of quietness sufficiently to myself for that purpose.

While I was at Exeter, I received from you the sheets of Jeffrey's review of Mr. Fox's History; and

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before I had done with my travels, I wrote to him some remarks which had occurred to me. Since I came to London, I find that the faults found with that article are chiefly on account of some inconsistencies; which are very intelligible to any one who knows in what manner Jeffrey writes his reviews, and with what carelessness in general he sets himself to do what all the world fancy he undertakes with an overwhelming sense of its importance.

Though some of the strictures which I have heard upon the criticism of Mr. Fox's history are, I think, well founded, the article pleased me very much, and still pleases me in its principal parts. I do not know, however, that it has occurred to you, but it has struck me of late, and strongly upon reading that piece, that though Jeffrey's powers of observation are strengthened, and his delineation of sentiments still more discriminating and refined, than when he first began these publications, his style of writing has suffered materially from the hurry in which he is usually left to compose. Some of his best-thought passages about Mr. Fox are composed with a clumsiness that surprised me.

I mean this letter really as a sort of commencement of correspondence, to break the spell which has bound me; and therefore I do not mean to go seriously into any of the subjects about which I have so much to write to you. I shall only touch them, and have done.

I wish very much to hear, whether any commission has yet passed the Great Seal, nominating the persons who are to prosecute the further inquiries relative to the improvements of the Scotch Judicature. I have heard nothing of it; but it is very likely that the first I am to hear of it will be from Scotland. The chan-

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cellor is slow, without being sure; and I have always suspected that there was a want of good faith in his undertaking to reform. It must go quite against his heart to make any change; though there is nobody so much addicted to the practice of criticising existing institutions in the law with severity: an inconsistency of character by no means rare. By the way, I should not be sorry to hear what remarks are current at your bar upon the new act; it was something rash in me to take the part I did, though I was very anxious and scrupulous about all that I proposed, and contented myself with securing the alterations that appeared to me right, with less attempt at ostentation upon the general subject than I originally intended, and perhaps less than it would have been right for me to have attempted.

I mean to write very soon again.

Affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

### LETTER CXVIII. TO FRANCIS JEFFREY, ESQ.

My dear Jeffrey, Glastonbury, October, 1808.

I came here in the mail from London, before dinner; and have been enjoying a quiet evening in a scene perfectly rural, and equally singular and beautiful. The verdure of Somerset is now in all its brilliancy; and if I had had you an hour ago with me, looking at the red sunset upon the hills of Glamorganshire, with a storm collecting upon Mendip, while immediately below us were the orchards and neat cottages, and Abbey ruins of this curious town, I think you might have been caught in a momentary admiration even of *English* landscape.

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Will you adopt the suggestion I made yesterday, of an article in some early number of the Review, upon the probable fate of the principles of liberty and good government upon the Continent? In our remoter views of the future, I fancy you and I come nearer to a coincidence than the terms in which we might compare our opinions would seem to show; while you, with a just caution and some mixture of despondency, suggest ultimate objects as what ought to be aimed at; and I, with more of sanguine credulity, and more too of indolence, would describe them as events which are steadily accomplishing themselves, and which will be realised as the result of a course which has never been suspended, but of which it is in truth the acceleration that has occasioned all this alarming violence—

"Kind nature the embryo blossoms will save."

All this, in my romancing, is equally probable, at a greater or less distance of time, whatever turn the immediate posture of affairs upon the Continent may assume. I do not allow myself to be very sanguine about that, for I find the best judges of such matters do not hope. Every thing, it is now manifest, depends upon the great operation upon the Danube; and the issue of that will either spread one conflagration over Europe, or plunge it once more, and until another crisis of similar uncertainty, in sullen submission.

Always truly yours,

FRA. HORNER.

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LETTER CXIX. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, Carnatic Office, 27th October, 1808.

The sight of your hand-writing once more gave me very great joy this morning. Since I wrote my last letter to you, in which I said something about Jeffrey's review of Mr. Fox's work, I have not looked into either, so that I cannot immediately recollect those parts of the criticism, which had struck me as being composed with less care and ease, than Jeffrey's style usually bears upon the face of it. But if I am not mistaken, those reflections at the beginning of the Review, upon the effect of political habits on the moral feelings, and which are well founded in great justness of observation, seemed to me to be clumsily expressed. But I will read them over again, and tell you whether I adhere to that criticism.

I do not know why Mr. Fox has not taken any notice of the charge against Algernon Sydney, of receiving money from the French court. For though the details of that part of Charles the Second's reign, do not enter into the plan of his preliminary sketch, yet he has dwelt so much upon Sydney's character, that it would have been natural, and perhaps was necessary, to advert to this very serious accusation. You will think me very Whiggish, for saying I do not believe it. Algernon Sydney is not quite a *hero* with me; he wanted many of the graces, and even virtues, that are necessary for the full perfection of that character. But he is a *martyr*, and you know my superstition; indeed it is not a long while since I went to his shrine at Penshurst, and looked upon his image with all the raptures of a pilgrim. So that you perceive I am in a very unfit state of mind, to receive your allu-

sion to that calumnious story. Do *you* believe it to be true? 1808. Æt. 31.

I have been more Whiggish than ever, all this summer; for I have been full of sanguine expectations, and, as far as I know myself, that is the state of mind in which I am most liable to think of politics. Some of my most confidential Whigs have treated me all along as too sanguine and somewhat Quixotic; and, to be sure, my castles were in Spain. Even still, my views of what the result is probably to be, are more confident than what I can find people ready to approve of. Spain seems to me now to be quite secure from ultimate subjugation by France, even if large French armies should once more penetrate the country, and gain general battles; and indeed, from all I can observe of Bonaparte's conduct with respect to that country, or guess from comparing it with other measures of his policy, I am much inclined to believe that he has for the present relinquished the project. What a triumph for the principles of liberty is this revolution in Spain, and its extensive influence upon the present and future fortunes of the world! It may even make those principles be felt and regarded by men of property and education in this country, and deliver them from the suspicion and derision to which they are at present exposed.

I passed a few days lately with Petty, in the beautiful country where he has taken an old house in the midst of old trees; and I cannot tell you how much I am pleased with Lady Louisa. I believe you saw her; so I need say nothing of her beauty. The gentleness of her manner has a degree of shyness joined with it, but not the least reserve; so that you soon discover her good and well-informed understanding.

1808. Æt. 31. She takes as much interest in his particular objects and pursuits as is natural and proper. I could not fancy a wife better suited to him. They made no stranger of me, and allowed me to see how they lived daily; he went on, for instance, with the book which he was then reading through of an evening to her. Their scheme seemed to me very rational and tranquil, and likely, as far as depend upon themselves, to insure them an uniform happiness; I am only apprehensive of her health, which seems to require much attention.

I went down on Saturday last with Whishaw to Hertford, on a visit to Malthus and little Hamilton.* The Pundit is very happy, and gets very fat; in two years' time, I take it, he will have a figure in which it will be hard to say which is length, and which breadth, and which thickness. In a little comfortless lodging, I found him with Sanscrit proof sheets of a grammar, sitting in the most perfect content, and ready to discuss any proposition. He is very much liked, as he may well be, by every body, for his sense and his temper. I do not know that you have ever seen Malthus; remember, next time you come to England, that I make you acquainted with him; Whishaw, who has known him long very intimately, says he is one of the very best of men; and that you know is the judgment of Rhadamanthus; and there is no man with whom I like better to converse upon controverted subjects; not that he is remarkably original in such extempore exercises, or even satisfactory always in his manner of communicating his views, but then he has the mere love of truth, for which I would willingly exchange, when you come to serious matters, all the

* See note, p. 186.

versatility, dexterity and eloquence that can be displayed in the famous sport, which is so much practised at our learned university. I know this looks like a decision in favour of dulness; and so the ingenious gentleman would think it. You have seen in Malthus's review of Newenham's Population of Ireland, some statement of those views of his with regard to the cheapness of the food of the common people, which we discussed together two years ago, and particularly, if I remember right, going from Ragland to Abergavenny. I think in this review you find the defect to which I have already alluded, and which affects all Malthus's writings; a want of precision in the statement of his principles, and distinct perspicuity in upholding the consequences which he traces from them. 1808. Æt. 31.

I am going to dine with Jeremy Bentham and Colonel Burr, and am very curious to see what sort of mixture will result from putting together pure philosophy and Yankee treason.

When you write to me pray let me hear of George Stewart*, and whether he is thought likely to live. My heart bleeds for Stewart. I am going to remove forthwith from Garden Court to Lincoln's Inn.

Ever affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

### LETTER CXX. FROM FRANCIS JEFFREY, ESQ.

My dear Horner, Edinburgh, 6th December, 1808.

I see by the Courier that the combustion which the review of Cevallos† has excited here has spread

* Son of Mr. Dugald Stewart, then dangerously ill.—ED.

† The article here alluded to was generally understood to have been

1808. Æt. 31. in some degree to London. I am convinced, too, that it has damaged us a little; and am so much persuaded that it is necessary for us to make more than an ordinary exertion at this crisis, that I take courage to do that which is now very painful to me—to solicit your aid in my day of need. The Tories having got a handle are running us down with all their might; and the ghosts of all the miserables we have slain are rising to join the vengeance. Walter Scott and William Erskine, and about twenty-five persons of consideration, have forbidden the Review to enter their doors. The Earl of Buchan, I am informed, opened his street door, and actually *kicked* it out! Then, Cumberland is going to start an anonymous rival; and, what is worse, I have reason to believe that Scott, Ellis, Frere, Southey, and some others are plotting another. You must see, therefore, that it is really necessary for us now to put on a manful countenance, and to call even the *emeriti* to our assistance. I entreat you to do an article for me during the holidays. We shall scarcely be out before the end of January, and I might even give you the whole of that month, if you need it. Now, I do think that you would give me 100*l.* if I was in great need of it; and this will cost you less work than you could do for 50*l.* for any knave of a solicitor: and it is of infinitely more consequence and gratification to me than any 100*l.* could be. Persuade yourself for once then, my dear Horner, that this is not a solicitation of custom, but that I make it with as much real anxiety and earnestness, and as much dread of a refusal, as if I were asking a pecuniary boon. You shall have your choice, of course, of a subject; but I wish you would put

written by Mr. Brougham, and is headed "Don Pedro Cevallos on the French Usurpation in Spain." Vol. xiii. p. 215.— Ed.

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your notes and notions of Malthus together at last. It is a fine subject; and you are in a manner pledged to it. But if you can think of any thing more popular or striking, take it—only no party politics, and nothing but exemplary moderation and impartiality on all politics. I have allowed too much mischief to be done from my mere indifference and love of sport; but it would be inexcusable to spoil the powerful instrument we have got hold of, for the sake of teazing and playing tricks. Tell me, too, what you think I should do myself. I grow stupid from day to day; but I will cheerfully dedicate the holidays to this service, if you will condescend to guide me.

I would gladly write you something more amusing, but I am over head and ears in session papers, and am dying of sleep. Murray tells me that you have still hopes of Spain. I have despaired utterly, from the beginning; and do not expect that we are ever to see 10,000 of our men back again—probably not 5000. The prospect is monstrous, and startles even my public apathy; but it is well to know what it is really. Murray will have told you all about our two courts, and the state of matters here. The club is cordial and vigorous, and the faithful steadfast, as becomes them. Do send me a line of comfort, and believe me, in infinite haste and stupidity,

Most truly yours,

F. Jeffrey.

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Æt. 31.

## Letter CXXI. TO THE REV. JOHN HEWLETT.

My dear Sir, Lincoln's Inn, December, 1808.

I return the three first sheets of your great undertaking*, with many thanks for your permission to me to have the pleasure of reading them. I fear it is not the proper word to use in mentioning such a work, but your notes have afforded me much entertainment, especially your history of the old serpent and *his catholic* church. Though a very serious task, you must find it a very interesting labour, in the way you pursue it; you can so diversify it, between researches that carry you into the most recondite curiosities of ancient history, and reflexions of a more general scope, upon the expression of which no degree of care in composition would appear misplaced. Will you allow me to say, that I am particularly satisfied with your supplementary observations on Genesis, chapter iii. In the present day, one is so sickened on all sides with the bigotry and intolerance that prevail in the discussions of all sorts of subjects, that there is a real enjoyment or rather refreshment, if I may so say, in finding a rational liberality and moderation; and that upon a subject in which infinitely more than in any other, to speak of it in a mere worldly light, bigotry or moderation have always affected, one way or the other, the happiness and tranquillity of mankind.

I have not been from home since I saw you, and shall not go out for some days yet; so I hope you will excuse me for not being able to have the pleasure

* His edition of the Bible with notes, in three volumes quarto. — Ed.

of dining with you to-morrow. Give my best regards to Mrs. Hewlett, and believe me always, my dear sir, 1809. Æt. 31.

Most sincerely yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CXXII. TO LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.

My dear Seymour, Lincoln's Inn, 7th January, 1809.

I was not prepared to expect that poor George Stewart would be so soon relieved from his sufferings, though I looked upon the melancholy event as inevitable. You will believe that I shall be anxious to hear now and then of Mr. and Mrs. Stewart. Her sorrow will be more lasting, I fear, and incurable; for no distress or calamity can be greater than hers. But I am apprehensive about the first excesses of his grief, in a constitution of such strong and sanguine affections. I know not when I should venture to write to him; from which I have abstained during the period of his poor son's illness, except at that momentary interval of apparent recovery which is always so delusive in this disease:—

> "Visa tamen tardi demum inclementia morbi
> Cessare est, reducemque iterum roseo ore salutem
> Speravi"——

a passage which I have heard Mr. Stewart read with the most touching expression, but which he will never be able to read again. About writing to him, I wish you, who are upon the spot, to direct me; after a while, he may take some interest in the details of public news, or be tempted to amuse himself with new books; and as soon as there would be any real kindness, and no unpleasant intrusion, in supplying him with these, I should be happy to make a duty of such attentions to him. I shall rely, therefore, upon being guided by your hints.

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If the last number of the "Journal de Physique" (for October, 1808,) is arrived in Edinburgh, let me recommend to you a report, made by Cuvier and Sabatier, on Dr. Gall's anatomical discoveries, at the direction of the Institute of France.* It is not upon the subject of his foolish craniology; but upon those particular views of the system of the brain and nerves, upon which, as the foundation, he conceives himself to have erected the solid fabric of his other speculations. This memoir is full of anatomical *minutiæ;* but I wish you to examine it as a piece of logic — a sort of scientific decree or judgment — reasoned upon the principles of the inductive method, in which the judges, by the test of those principles, laboriously separate ascertained physical facts from loose evidence and the adulteration of metaphysical fallacies. I have been a good deal struck with the excellent manner of the report in these respects; but I do not recommend it the less to you as an exercise, because I thought there were one or two passages in which they did not strictly, or, at least, perspicuously enough, keep to the line of demarcation between the phenomena of anatomy and those of mind. But I fear the little I ever knew of these subjects is become less by long disuse.

Affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CXXIII. TO MRS. DUGALD STEWART.

My dear Mrs. Stewart, Lincoln's Inn, 25th January, 1809.

I should have written to you this day, even if I had not received your kind letter; for I had the

* Rapport sur un Mémoire de MM. Gall et Spurzheim, relatif à l'Anatomie du Cerveau — Commissaires, MM. Tenon, Portal, Sabatier, Pinel, et Cuvier. Journal de Physique, tome lxvii., Octobre, 1808.—ED.

pleasure to hear from Ward of your being in good health, as well as Mr. Stewart. And this relief to me was the more complete, by hearing at the same time that you were gone into the country. Lord Webb has been very attentive in easing my anxiety about you from time to time; and he could not do me a more real kindness. 1809. Æt. 31.

I am very much comforted by the account you give me of Mr. Stewart's health. And, on every public as well as private account, I rejoice at the resolution he has formed to quit the college after this winter; for though I never think of the decline of that institution without a melancholy regret, yet its fall is now inevitable, and the continuation of its best remaining advantages would be no compensation to the public for a delay in the execution of Mr. Stewart's other plans, or to those who love him and you, for your losing that freedom and power of retirement which you know so well how to enjoy. I shall regret only Mr. Playfair's solitude; but he is in the mean time establishing a new reputation, in addition to what he possessed before; and it is some triumph to expect, that the last glory of the college will be the exertion of those who protested against the system which has destroyed it.

There is nothing new, I think, to-day; when any thing occurs, I will write you a little note. Though in truth I have not much heart for politics; and find myself more alienated than you would believe from the immediate questions and objects. It is not that I despair of what is to be the ultimate result; but there is such a prospect in this country of an interval, during which no exertions will avail, that it requires an iron fortitude to keep up one's interest in the details that are passing. I never felt any pleasure in

1809. Æt. 31. the game itself, and care only for the object; and indeed if it were otherwise, there is so little capacity in any of the actors among us, and such a tone of illiberality in the successful ones, that my feelings as a spectator are often the very reverse of being pleasurable.

I believe you are in the neighbourhood of Minto. When you see any of that family, may I beg you will present my respects to them: I have always regretted that they left London so soon after I had the good fortune to make their acquaintance. With affectionate remembrances to Mr. Stewart, I am ever,

Most sincerely yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CXXIV. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, Lincoln's Inn, 26th January, 1809.

I cannot let another day end, without thanking you for your letter of last Sunday. It gives me the most gratifying proof of that personal kindness, which is one of my chief comforts and pleasures in life. Fame, even reputation, are things too big for me; but the possession of them would not fill me with so much satisfaction as does your solicitude about them for me. Your indulgence, I well know, has no mixture of intended flattery; perhaps it will spoil me as much as if it were. But be its effects what they may, in blinding your judgment or mine, I delight to enjoy your partiality as such, and have more gladness of heart from it, than if I were to earn the successes that you would have me believe are not out of my reach.

Besides yourself, I can perceive that the more par-

tial of my friends think me wrong in not making an attempt to speak in the House of Commons; while the rest have given me up as incapable. Sometimes, I have been for a moment upon the point of agreeing with the latter in their opinion upon the subject, for every one has his moments of honesty and self-confession. But, upon the whole, I am willing to believe that I might have done better, and that I have reason to reproach myself with a want of proper exertion. I have better resolutions for the present session; of which we shall see what may come. It would be an idle history of indolence, fastidiousness, dread of failure, &c., were I to give you my apologies for not making the trial on several occasions. There have been some discouragements of a different nature; the petty war of political personalities is exceedingly irksome to me, it disgusts rather than irritates me, (being personally not implicated), and I have witnessed but little else since I sat in the House. I suspect too that I have not nerves for a hopeless unavailing struggle, where I have a contempt for my antagonists, and more than suspect the unfairness of their fighting. Then I have a great dislike for the audience in that place, in their present temper of stupid illiberality. I am made, or educated, for the sunshine of an improving community; and have not yet acquired the habits and resolutions that are more suitable to the present state of this country. I am learning them a little; and there is not one motive I have assigned for my silence in Parliament, that does not, I own, admit of a complete answer. I have one still to assign, which probably has but too just a foundation: my dread of finding it an effort above me, to discuss a large subject in public after many speakers, and with numerous details and arguments

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1809. Æt. 31. to manage. I have never made the experiment, and perhaps I should sink in the first attempt; though I am perfectly convinced that the power is to be acquired by practice, since men of very humble talents have acquired it. This, I take it, is the real cause, though confirmed and coloured by the others I have mentioned. Of course, you would not put me upon making a set speech, though fame for a day is to be had in that way; and rather than give such an express demonstration of my incapacity for business, I would sit contentedly under the doubts which my friends might continue to entertain of me.

God bless you, my dear Murray, and believe me ever affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

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The session of Parliament had commenced on the 19th of January, and it was prorogued on the 21st of June. Notwithstanding his "better resolutions," he still held back from taking any prominent part in the debates; for, except on one occasion, his speeches this session occupy a very limited space in the columns of Hansard. On the 13th of June, the Scotch Judicature Bill was under consideration, and Mr. Horner is reported as having spoken "at considerable length, upon a great and oppressive defect existing in the mode of proceeding in the Court of Session, for which the Bill then before the House afforded no remedy; viz. the necessity under which suitors were placed, when answering the allegations of their opponents, of first taking out copies of all the elaborate pleadings required to be entered by the other side. These pleadings, he said, in some instances that came within his knowledge, amounted to a volume of 1500

pages; and he had known instances where, though the sum in litigation did not exceed 200*l.* or 300*l.*, the fees of Court alone amounted to from 500*l.* to 700*l.*" 1809. Æt. 31.

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LETTER CXXV. TO LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.

My dear Seymour, Lincoln's Inn, 27th January, 1809.

I had a letter from Mrs. Stewart two days ago, and have since written to her at Mount Tiviot. Her account upon the whole is satisfactory, both of Mr. Stewart and herself. She informs me, that he has at last determined, and openly declared his intention, of lecturing no more after the present winter. I think this resolution quite right. Thirty-eight years of service would justify him, even if he were retiring from all public duty; but he has engagements to the public and to posterity, which he ought no longer to delay fulfilling, and for which he will thus secure himself an ample command of leisure. I am pleased, besides, with the hope, that he may be tempted to employ some part of it in England, and that I shall have some opportunities of seeing him.

I hear faint and distant rumours of immense discoveries in chemistry, which I eagerly wish I had the means of knowing and following; but it has pleased the gods to dispose of me otherwise, for no good to others, and for less enjoyment to myself. I hear, however, of Davy, Berzelius, and others, from Tennant occasionally; and their late successes appear truly wonderful and immensely important. How happens it, that Edinburgh contributes nothing to these discoveries, with all the study and zeal that prevail there for this science?

1809. Æt. 31. Will you listen for a moment to a difficulty which I wish to have solved, in a very large speculation, but one with which you must be very conversant? Since the modern astronomers completed the Newtonian system of the universe, and ascertained all the apparent irregularities to be periodical and constant, we have been led to the proposition, that all the revolutions of the system are uniform, and repeated in a certain order. The views of geology which have been opened by the Huttonian manner of treating that science, point to the same conclusion, with regard to the changes that happen to the surface of this planet; which would appear to be repeated in a certain uniform succession, and are not progressive either from an ascertained origin, or towards a probable end. But is there not one difficulty in the way of this general conclusion, on account of the chemical composition of the substances of which the surface of the earth consists? If every earth is an oxyd, the oxydation has been progressive; and going back through the whole succession of compositions that have been effected, one would be led up (within the limits of definite duration) to the first instance in this series, to the first union of oxygen with the first metal that was oxydated. I have no doubt that the principle of periodic revolution will be found to prevail throughout nature; but I cannot state to myself in what manner this apparent exception is to be reduced under it. Probably I am talking nonsense all this while; if there appears to you to be any reason in the speculation, but that I have not sufficiently explained myself, I will try again. It is rash in me now-a-days to "tempt with wandering feet the dark unbottomed infinite abyss;" but in making an escape from the subjects to which I ought to confine myself, and trying an excursion once more

"through the palpable obscure," I feel the gladness and vanity of an old man who tries to repeat the scenes of his young days. 1809. Æt. 31.

I am ever, my dear Seymour,
Sincerely yours,
FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CXXVI. FROM THE REV. JOHN HEWLETT.

My dear Sir, Hunter Street, 8th February, 1809.

I enclose you the Remarks on the subject of Hebrew Numerals, &c.*; and you know how much I value your sentiments on any thing connected with literature and science. I dare not trespass too much on your time, which is extremely valuable; but you will oblige me by devoting half an hour to the subject, and giving me your candid opinion. Tell me, if you think any thing is deficient, redundant, irrelevant, or inconclusive; and particularly, tell me, if you think there is any thing in the paper that can possibly offend the rational friends of the Church, as well as Christianity.

I am, my dear Sir,
Yours most faithfully,
J. HEWLETT.

LETTER CXXVII. TO THE REV. JOHN HEWLETT.

My dear Sir, Lincoln's Inn, 9th February, 1809.

I cannot conceive there should be the least chance of your giving offence to the rational friends

* HEWLETT'S BIBLE, Numbers, chapter i., note to verse 46., "Even all they that were numbered were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty."—ED.

1809. Æt. 31. of the Church, by this valuable and curious dissertation. If it be liable to objection, that must be in common with every attempt that can be made to settle, or correct, or elucidate the text of the Scriptures. In the present times, so peculiarly unfavourable to all kinds of free inquiry, persons may be found, no doubt, who would dread, even if it were now to be done for the first time, that there should be any use of reason upon such subjects; they are persons who would have been hostile to the Protestant Reformation itself. No good would ever be accomplished, if the influence, and even the malignity, of such persons were not wholly disregarded by those who love truth, and employ their labours in the discovery and cultivation of it.

This subject of the Numerals, and (that which introduces it) the population of Israel, seem both involved in very great difficulties; which probably admit of no better solution, than by approximations more or less ingenious. Is not the number 16,539, to which, upon one supposition, the number of the eleven tribes would be reduced, smaller than is likely to have been the fact; and inconsistent with what is said throughout Joshua, with regard to the 40,000 men who were brought into the field? And is it not against this hypothesis that the total sum in this passage not only agrees with the particular items recited, but with the total given in other passages, not only that which you quote, but also in Exodus, xii. 37., and likewise with particulars mentioned in such passages as 2 Chronicles, xiii. 3.; xiv. 8.; xvii. from 12. to the end; xxv. 5.; and xxvi. 12. and 13. All these passages are so consistent, that perhaps one mode of conjectural emendation would apply equally to them all, and still preserve their con-

sistency; but if it fails to do so, is there not an argument from that against there being an error in the text merely? After all, is it to be wondered at if the historians of Palestine manifest the same disposition to exaggerate the numbers of their nation and of their mighty men of valour, which is evinced by the historians of all countries, especially in early times, and by none more than by the learned of the Egyptians, among whom Moses had studied? It would no doubt be a remarkable and rare instance of historical fidelity, if the numbers were really consistent with probability; and your endeavour to remove the apparent exaggeration is in this respect calculated, instead of offending the rational friends of Christianity, to remove one of the popular but slightest grounds of objection to the inspiration of the whole text of the Pentateuch. I cannot suggest that there is any deficiency in your statement; nor does any part of it appear to me either redundant, or in the least degree irrelevant. With respect to its being conclusive, I have already ventured to point out what would make it more strongly so to my mind, owning, at the same time, that I think it most likely the original author did greatly exaggerate. Believe me ever

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Yours most faithfully,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CXXVIII. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, London, 11th February, 1809.

I cannot help being uneasy till I hear of your health. Unless you make yourself quite well, you

1809. must not come up to London, and expose yourself to
Æt. 31. all the evil chances of late hours and hot rooms.

I have not changed my view of the Duke of York's affair, since I wrote to you last; many more circumstances have come out in the evidence, which places his guilt beyond all question, without yet carrying the proof to the point of corrupt connivance, though making that the most probable inference upon the whole. My sense of the critical importance of the proceedings that shall be had upon this case, is still farther increased by a rumour which I have heard, that the ministers and the Duke of York together consider the matter as now brought to this alternative, resignation or impeachment, and that the Duke will not resign.

I shall consider the impeachment of the Duke of York by the House of Commons as the death-knell of the constitution. It will keep the whole country in a ferment for months; the House of Lords will acquit; both houses will be looked upon by the public as having concerted this acquittal: and then you have the alternative to expect, of an entire prostration of all public opinion and popular efforts before the Crown, or a democratical anarchy of which no man can see the end. I think these are distinct public grounds upon which the House of Commons should refuse to impeach the Duke; because the present case is one, not for punishment, but for future distrust and immediate removal, both from the nature of the evidence, and still more from the rank of the person. I do think, that the ministers who advise an impeachment as the means of ultimately screening the Duke from the consequences of his conduct, will more criminally betray the public interests to serve an individual, than by any other act of which, in the present

days, a minister can be guilty. The course for the House of Commons seems to me to be clear; to address, in the mildest and most general terms, conveying their wish to the King, that he would remove the Commander-in-Chief. I should like best to have it done by an address of the Commons, because even the formality and record of such a victory increase its value, by attaching it to the merits of the constitutional assembly; but even this advantage I would consent to relinquish, provided the substantial triumph of public opinion is secured by the voluntary resignation of the Duke, so much do I dread the consequences of a struggle between the Crown and the people. 1809. Æt. 31.

Tell me what you think of these views, which I set down very hastily, having only a few minutes to write to you. I am very anxious to know if the light in which I see the subject appears to you to be just.

Believe me ever affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CXXIX. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, Lincoln's Inn, 25th March, 1809.

Your brother has not given up all hopes yet of your coming to town; and I still think it possible that the pleasure of travelling with Jeffrey may tempt you to undertake the journey. For myself, I do not know what to wish; we meet so uncomfortably at this season in London; and if you come so late, your stay will be too short to allow me any interval of monopoly: however, you shall not have my authority for not coming, except upon the condition that, somewhere or other in England or Scotland, we shall contrive to pass the month of September together.

1809. Æt. 31. My wish is to come down to Scotland; though I cannot foresee what arrangements it will be practicable for me to make about the Carnatic Office, if I retain my situation there so long: for I have thought of resigning it, when the business advances to a certain stage, to which it will probably be brought before that time. I have been prevented from going the whole of my circuit this time, except the last county; I mean to go down to Taunton on Friday next, and as the sessions are held the week after the assizes, I shall be absent from London till about the 15th of April.

I am not surprised at the desponding tone in which you express yourself respecting the conduct of the majority of the House of Commons in the Duke of York's question. At the same time, I do not feel the same degree of despondency, because the conduct of the House in general has been much more patriotic, and the vote of the minority has been much more effective, than I expected at the outset of this important inquiry, that either would be found to be. The practical measure has been obtained; and it can neither be denied, nor fail to be attended with a beneficial impression among all intelligent men, that this practical result has been accomplished by the united force of public opinion, and of the respectable minority in the House. Had that minority been less, the Duke would not have resigned. That there should have been such a majority upon such a question, and in such a state of the public mind, is a disgrace to the constitution; and strengthens all former conclusions for diminishing the influence of the Crown, as well as the arguments in favour of a place bill. But the successful issue of the contest is a satisfactory demonstration of the vigour and virtue that still remain in the constitution, infirm as it is.

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In the midst of the satisfaction, which I feel upon the whole result of this affair, as it affects the popular interests of the constitution, I cannot disguise from you that the part which the opposition leaders have taken fills me with concern; because there are no longer any men, not a single man in the House of Commons, in whom, as a leader of the popular party, I can repose confidence. But this is a larger subject than I have time to explain myself upon at present; I will take another opportunity. This is entirely confidential; for I would not by a premature declaration of my apprehensions, run the risk of hastening the event which I dread. I am giving the most mature consideration to the present state of parties, and to the probable course of party relations, in order to be prepared for every turn it may take, and to be sure that my conduct will be right. I am so much a spectator only in the business, that I am not likely to have much trouble in attaining a correct view of what that conduct ought to be.

Believe me ever affectionately yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CXXX. FROM FRANCIS JEFFREY, ESQ.

My dear Horner, Edinburgh, 2d April, 1809.

You take your revenge of me now I am sure, for you owe me at least three letters, and the first of them a very urgent one: you have scarcely gone any circuit either, I hear, and I am informed, from more quarters than one, stand greatly in need of scolding from any person who has courage to do you that good office Why do you not make speeches, if you will

1809. Æt. 31. not write reviews? I shall be very sorry to see you set down decidedly among the country gentlemen, at least till you have a *rus* of your own to console you; but I must tell you that your friends wonder at you, and that our enemies are impertinent at your silence. Do, my dear Horner, assume a more manly pride, and trample this fastidiousness under your feet; make yourself known for what you are, and at 31, and in the crisis of Europe, do not still think of training yourself for futurity.

You will answer me perhaps, I hope you will, that you are busy with your profession; but this is not a sufficient answer for such a man, and at such a time. You are in Parliament, and you are known to be in Parliament; nobody knows any thing about your doings in Westminster Hall, and your not doing elsewhere is noted, and lamented. You owe it to your fame, and I think to your country, to make some effort, and even if you really think that could be the consequence, to expose yourself in some degree in that duty. I am *inspired* I believe to tell you all this, so I hope you will receive it with proper reverence, for I cannot tell what has led me to it.

I still hope to come and scold you in person, but I get on so miserably with my Reviews, that I begin to doubt; however I will come if I can spare but ten days for you. It is necessary, I suspect, to appear once in two years in London, to avoid falling under your utter contempt: you neglect me already, I take it, for this long rustication. Murray will not go at all now. Thomson is with you by this time, and will tell you all our news; so I cannot choose a worse time for writing. I do it mainly to reproach you, and to give myself another chance of hearing from you. I am myself incredibly idle; and shall grow poor

apace, if I refuse as many fees as I have done out of pure indolence, this last Session. I expect an answer still about my reviews, though I disdain to say any thing more on the matter. If I am to think of reviewing Malthus myself, could you give me any notes or ideas? It is a pang to my heart to quit this hold upon you, but it is idle I fear to hope for any thing better, perhaps even for this; — God mend you! — If you do not write me soon, I will send you an ounce and a half every day by the post, till you plead.

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Ever very affectionately yours,

F. JEFFREY.

I am reviewing Gertrude*, and praising her perhaps a little too much *con amore;* but I do love her. Tell me what you and the *dotti* of London have uttered by your oracles on the subject. It is but rarely I consult oracles.

LETTER CXXXI. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, Lincoln's Inn, 29th April, 1809.

You ask me how I like Nisi Prius and the examination of witnesses? The very little business I have had as yet on the circuit or sessions, has been chiefly in the Crown Court; and, speaking from that little experience, I should say that the extrication of the case you have to make out from witnesses, in the presence of the Jury, and under the rules of evidence by which we are bound, is one of the most agreeable parts of our professional practice which I have tried. I am more and more satisfied of the utility of going

* Campbell's Poem of Gertrude of Wyoming.

1809. Æt. 31. the circuit, and from appearances, I do not despair of being gradually introduced into some share of business.

I am greatly captivated by the project you have sketched out, for a tour in the South of Scotland in September next. I wish very much to see that part of my native country, with which I am wholly unacquainted. Nothing will prevent me from putting it in execution, but the necessity of returning from the circuit to the Carnatic Office, which I hope I may be able to avoid by some arrangement. Indeed, I shall probably be able to resign my situation there by that time.

I am very glad that Jeffrey thinks so favourably of Campbell's new poem, for *his* good opinion is very essential to the poet's prosperity. Nobody will deny that it abounds in touches of a true genius; but the obscurity and embarrassment in the narrative, and the many *bouts-rimés* which we may charge upon the impatience of his subscribers, prevent me from reading the work yet with that uninterrupted pleasure which poetry must give, or it fails. My enjoyment in that sort of reading depends, perhaps too much for a just taste, upon the beauty of all the details in point of execution; and the stanza, which Campbell has chosen for this poem, perhaps imposed upon the author a more indispensable necessity of finishing to a faultless perfection, because it gives the reader so many rests in his attention. The breaking of the subject by pauses at equal intervals, imposed another necessity, that of filling up the parts of the subject, in themselves unequal, by circumstances not only selected with judgment, but "pencilled over with all the curious touches of art." I cannot so well explain what I would have had Campbell's work to have been, as by

sending you to read the serious and tender parts of the first canto of the Castle of Indolence. 1809. Æt. 31.

Jeffrey arrived in town yesterday, and I was happy to find him looking so well, and in such delightful spirits.

Affectionately yours,
FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CXXXII. TO J. A. MURRAY, ESQ.

My dear Murray, Lincoln's Inn, 9th May, 1809.

I gave notice in the House last night of a resolution which I mean to propose, in the committee of the whole House upon the third Report of the Finance Committee, for the purpose of grounding upon that resolution, if acceded to, a bill to render illegal the sale of all judicial offices, by persons having the power of appointing to them.

The grounds upon which I proceed, as far as England is concerned, are to be found stated and sanctioned by the greatest authorities, both in the state and the law, from Sir Matthew Hale downwards. You will find his opinion, in his tract upon the amendment of the laws. And the same sentiments are expressed in one of the Reports made by the Royal Commissioners, and presented to both Houses of Parliament, in 1740. They are cited, with full concurrence, by the Finance Committee of 1797, in their 27th Report. I am desirous, of course, to make this a general law, equally applied to the three kingdoms. With regard to Scotland, it will be necessary for me to be put in possession of more detailed information than I can obtain here, or without your assistance, as to the number and description of offices of a judicial nature,

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Affectionately yours,
FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CXXXIII. TO CHARLES GRANT, ESQ., CHAIRMAN OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY.

Sir, London, 18th May, 1809.

As it will be necessary for me very soon to resign my situation at the board of commissioners for investigating the debts of the late Nabobs of the Carnatic, I wish to give you notice of my intention to do so, and I shall likewise give notice to the agent in London for the majority of the creditors, in order that you may have full time for the appointment of my successor. Though, for a considerable time past, I have found the attendance at the board inconvenient to me, and incompatible with the pursuit of my profession, I was desirous, if it were possible, to see the investigations in which I have been engaged brought to a close. But the information which has just been received from the Commissioners at Fort St. George, with respect to the multitude and vast amount of the claims which have been made before them, removes to so great a distance the prospect of terminating these inquiries, that I feel myself under the necessity of declining to act longer in the commission.

That my resignation, however, may occasion no delay in the progress of the business before the board, I propose to continue to act till the end of the month of June; by which time, probably, all the instructions for the Commissioners at Fort St. George, upon the

claims made in England, will be completed, and the gentleman who shall be nominated by the Court of Directors and the creditors to succeed me, will be ready to take his seat at the board. 1809. Æt. 31.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CXXXIV. TO THE HON. JOHN W. WARD.

My dear Ward, 24th May, 1809.

I am out of patience with the patriots, as they call themselves, and with the Opposition too; some reforms are become absolutely necessary, both with regard to expenditure, and in the representation of the Commons: but the patriots delude the people about the extent and nature of the evil that calls for remedy, and likewise as to the efficacy of the remedies which they propose; and the Opposition, by a timid, wavering, and ambiguous line of conduct, are losing all command of the popular party, both in the House of Commons and in the country. This has been a new sort of session in the House of Commons; the next, it is probable, will be still more remarkable, particularly if the Opposition leaders come to it, as they probably will, with the same want of explicit and determined opinions under which they labour at present. There is no evading any longer those discussions about sinecure places and the reform of Parliament; the questions must be met directly, and some considerable concessions must be made to the popular sentiments.

Windham is the only man who speaks out; with that contempt of popularity, of which the courage is

1809. Æt. 31. quite admirable; but with that systematic repugnance to every proposition that savours of reformation, which turns all his wisdom into foolishness; and if it should guide the councils of government, will speedily deprive us of the constitution, the living principle of which has always consisted in prudent and timely reforms. It is very irksome to me to have a middle sort of course to steer for myself; it feels so like trimming; and it is so completely ineffectual: but what else can I do, when I cannot find men and measures together? I like most of the *parliamentary* measures of the patriots, for I would make some exceptions; but the men I never can have any reliance upon; not so much that I suspect any of them, or rather I should say many of them, to entertain unconstitutional designs, but because they seem to me, one and all, wholly devoid of political ability. I like the men of the late Cabinet and old Opposition, but their proceedings in this session, their backwardness upon some questions, and their indistinctness about certain subjects, that are fundamental and (what is more) will press upon every public man immediately for a declared opinion or conduct, have shaken my confidence, not in their views and intentions, but in their judgment and firmness. All this, however, interests you, I fear, very little.

Faithfully yours,

FRA. HORNER.

LETTER CXXXV. TO FRANCIS JEFFREY, ESQ.

My dear Jeffrey, London, 12th June, 1809.

I hope you have received Sergeant Heywood's book; I write, though in a very great hurry, to ac-

knowledge your kind letter. Lord Webb and I have been down for two days at Hertford, and passed them very agreeably with the Pundit* and Malthus. 1809. Æt. 31.

I hope you will not commit yourself upon the subject of Parliamentary Reform, before you have fully made up your mind, after a careful view of the question. It is very fit that you should give your opinion upon it at large, before the next meeting of Parliament, but I should grieve very much if you were to take up in sport any side of the debate that first strikes you. I am a good deal of a reformer, and am prepared to go a considerable length; the question as to Scotland admits of no hesitation, and in England I would give members to some important classes of the population who can scarcely be said to be represented. It is at the same time a perilous thing, either to change the qualification, or to take away franchises, or, by compensations, to recognise such a principle as the acquisition of that kind of property. I see a great deal of practical benefit result, even to the interests of liberty and popular rights, from the most rotten parts of the constituent body; and while I am satisfied that we should, upon the whole, be a more virtuous and patriotic House of Commons, if the deputies were more dependant upon the people, there are many occasions on which the clamorous and inconstant voice of the public would dictate a wrong course of conduct, and I cannot say, upon a retrospect of parliamentary history, even in the worst periods, that the House of Commons has ever for a great length of time, or upon a system of measures, been at variance with the sentiments of the people. The close of the American war is the strongest case of

* Professor Alexander Hamilton.

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that nature; and it was then, accordingly, that the remedy of a reform in the representation was most thought of. It is very fit to be considered also, whether, at any former period of our history, the formation of the House approached nearer than it does at present to the theory of our constitution, as drawn by general writers. With all this, I have a strong bias in favour of the proposition for rendering the representation more adequate and agreeable to that theory; and I only throw out these topics of doubt, that I may have the benefit of your mature consideration of them. It is a momentous question in its consequences, as likely to affect the permanent vigour of the constitution. It is no less so, on account of the circumstances of the time in which we may be forced to discuss it; not the most favourable, certainly, for any measure of internal change. And I cannot therefore express to you how anxious I am, that you should take the utmost pains with the article you mean to write upon it; you ought to consider what it is, to send out eleven thousand prints of your doctrine on that subject, whatever that doctrine may be, with all the weight of your authority, and in the midst of such an agitation of the popular mind; and indeed the question has been recently connected so much with the irritating topics of the day, that you should not appear to enter into it, but with more remote views, and upon the largest contemplation of all parts of the discussion, and of all the effects of the proposed measure.

Miss Edgeworth's Tales of Fashionable Life, Alphonse by Mad. Genlis, and Wordsworth's pamphlet on Spanish affairs, are the last new books I have heard of.

Ever sincerely yours,

FRA. HORNER.

P.S. I hope no notice of the Quarterly will ever be suffered to appear in the Edinburgh. You must be above controversy, however provoked. You must be delighted with the accounts which have appeared lately in the newspapers relating to the state of opinions in Germany; they are quite your politics and mine; and they will ultimately restore the civilisation and independence of Europe. 1809. Æt. 32.

LETTER CXXXVI. TO HIS FATHER.

My dear Sir, Marlborough, 20th August, 1809.

I wrote to my mother from Bodmin, and to my sisters from Bridgwater. The assizes at Bristol were finished yesterday, and we are got so far on our way to town, where we shall arrive early on Tuesday. This circuit has been pleasant enough; and notwithstanding a great deal of wet weather, we have contrived to secure several fine days for excursions from the direct road of our journey, and have been on horseback for the best part of five hundred miles. I have not been so robust for some years past, as I am now, not having had a single day of cold during the circuit. You will, of course, be desirous to know whether I have had any thing to do; and though I would rather say nothing about it, until I have good news to tell, yet if I did not own that I have had no briefs this time, you might for a moment perhaps suppose me to be indifferent about the anxiety which you have for my success. For myself, I do not consider this as a disappointment, or as otherwise than it must be, and ought to be; for the business upon the circuit is at present in the hands of those who are best entitled to confidence, and between them and

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me there are several who have never had so much encouragement, as even the little I have already received, and who have a just right to succeed before me, both because they have waited longer, and because their qualifications are better. The little I have had formerly was, in truth, out of my turn; and I see no reason to relinquish an expectation I once expressed to you before, that possibly some accidental advantages, which make me more known, may advance me into business with rather less delay than is the common, and necessarily the common lot of the profession. I have said so much, on account of the solicitude which you feel upon this subject: I have never myself been sanguine, either in the hope of early or great business, but a moderate share, enough for independence, I reckon myself ultimately sure of; as much as one can be of any thing, which, though subject to the ordinary accidents, may be aimed at steadily.

I am happy to think that your journey has been of a little service to your health; for my mother thinks you are decidedly the better for it. I entreat that you will avail yourself of the excellent medical advice you can have at Edinburgh; and as I find that they enjoin exercise on horseback, I trust that I need not any longer urge my recommendations of it.

In our way to Bristol, Adam and I spent the greater part of two days at Sir John Hippesley's; Mr. Strangways Horner, who married his daughter, was there, of whom I should make a great *éloge*, if I were to measure out my praises in proportion to the civility which he expressed to me. He has one great merit in my eyes, a real attachment to Scotland, where he was four years for the purposes of education; two at Glasgow, and afterwards two at

Edinburgh, in the house of Dr. Blacklock. He was also in the Speculative Society, in the days of Emmet and Charles Hope; which drew us still nearer. I have promised to pay him a visit next winter at Mells Park, which lies in our way from Wells. Let my dear mother know that I have received her letter of the 13th instant. I will write more frequently to you, after I am settled in town, than I have done upon the circuit, where nothing occurs that can interest any body who does not belong to it. London is always full of news. I mean to be pretty stationary there during the month of September, with the exception, perhaps, of a visit out of town on Saturday and Sunday; though the only one which I at present intend is to Lord Carrington. I have great pleasure in the prospect of so many mornings to myself for reading, having scarcely known that for a fortnight together since I entangled myself in the Carnatic commission; which I shall always consider a blunder in my plans, and a blunder wholly my own. I should have known more law by this time, and more of public business too, if I had not yielded to that temptation; which was a departure from my general scheme of life, and against which Murray warned me at the time. With my most affectionate love to my mother and my sisters, I am ever, my dear Sir, faithfully yours,

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FRA. HORNER.

### LETTER CXXXVII. TO JOHN ALLEN, ESQ.

Dear Allen, Birmingham, 30th September, 1809.

I am very much obliged to you for the letter which I received yesterday, the only scrap I have had from London during all this bustle. There must be

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a good many details and circumstances to hear of the last scenes of a ministry, which in its exit, as in its origin, is more ignominious to the country, as well as to the principal actors, than even any other of the present reign.

I reckon so confidently upon what Lord Grenville and Lord Grey will do, that I have abstained from troubling you with any inquiries. Their course is plain; and I rely implicitly upon their pursuing it from first to last. They cannot make a coalition with either set; nor can they become the King's ministers without obtaining his consent to the immediate relief of the Catholics. Whatever expediency and patriotism there might have been at former periods, in temporising upon the question, our friends are no longer free to temporise, for they are committed upon it so strongly in the opinion of the public, that they must stand fast to that point, or forfeit all chance of ever regaining public confidence. Every thing I have seen of late in the country confirms me in this opinion. Not that the late ministry is actually pledged to the Catholic concessions, as a necessary condition of their accepting office, if the details of the transaction in March 1807 be accurately stated and fairly reasoned; but of this the public is incapable: the King, by dismissing them, though they yielded the point, fixed the question upon them; and the universal impression of the public (whether favourable or not) has so identified their return to power with the success of that question, that they must carry it, or lose the last remnant of character with the people; while, on the other hand, I believe that their carrying it would (in spite of Protestant prejudices) establish them very firmly in public confidence, by so intelligible a proof, both of political strength

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and of attachment to principle. With this view of what they ought to do, and with my reliance upon their integrity, I am far from having much expectation that Lord Grenville and Lord Grey will form an administration. Nor can I believe that this step has been taken by Liverpool and Percival with any other view, than to gain time for the return of Lord Wellesley. He is manifestly the man for the King's purpose, and for their purpose, in the present circumstances; and into his hands, or Canning's, the whole must ultimately fall.

What I am most anxious about is, that our leaders of Opposition should explain themselves so clearly, that they may all remain untouched by any suspicion of a disposition to yield to the Court, and acquire strength in the country, by this opportunity of proving their consistency and independence. You can scarcely conceive how lowly and unjustly all descriptions of persons in the country think of the political virtue of either of the statesmen who have been sent for upon this occasion; among the Dissenters, Reformers, Jacobins, Philosophers (for some of all of these I have seen in this part of the world), there prevails an uniform apathy and indifference about party, and distrust of men. For God's sake, let us have no more coalitions; and then, either victory upon the Catholic question, or a resolute prosecution of it, may help us again up hill.*

* The ministerial changes here referred to were caused by disagreements in the Cabinet between Mr. Canning and Lord Castlereagh, (which led to a duel, both having previously resigned their places,) and by the death, shortly afterwards, of the Duke of Portland, who had been First Lord of the Treasury and Prime Minister. The remaining ministers made proposals to Lords Grenville and Grey, to effect a coalition, which were rejected. The Marquis of Wellesley succeeded Mr. Canning as Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and the Earl of Liverpool, who had the Home Department, replaced Lord Castlereagh as Secretary for the Department of the War and the Colonies, the Hon. Richard Ryder succeeding

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I am going to-morrow into Somersetshire, for the Sessions; if you will write to me at Taunton, I shall be much obliged to you. And pray let me know whether Lord John's* going to Edinburgh is settled, and Playfair's uncertainty removed; from his letter, which I sent to Lord Holland, he was in a difficulty about it, which may have been inconvenient to him.

If it is not too much trouble, will you send me to Taunton another copy of your "Suggestions†," for I lent that you gave me to Dr. Parr, and he would not let me have it again; he never read any thing, he said, "with such unhesitating approbation." You promised me that I should have several copies, which I wish to send to two or three persons when I return to town. The Courier, I understand, states, that Lord Grenville is arrived in town, but that Lord Grey has declined to come. If the summons was from the King, how could he refuse? and if it was an invitation from Percival, how could Lord Grenville accept?

Yours sincerely,

FRA. HORNER.

Lord Liverpool as Home Secretary; Mr. Percival, who had been Chancellor of the Exchequer only, became also First Lord of the Treasury and Prime Minister. No other changes in the Cabinet took place. — ED.

* Lord John Russell, who resided for some time with Professor Playfair at Edinburgh.

† For an account of this work, see the letter to Lord Webb Seymour, of 17th October, with which Vol. II. commences. — ED.

LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.

# APPENDIX.

## APPENDIX A. (Page 71.)

### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.*

BY HENRY HALLAM, ESQ.

WEBB JOHN SEYMOUR, son of the last, and brother of the present Duke of Somerset, was born in the spring of 1777. He received his classical education principally at the school of Ramsbury, in Wiltshire, kept at that time by Mr. Edward Meyrick. Both the Duke of Somerset and his brother were of Christ Church, Oxford, where Lord Webb appears to have begun to reside early in 1794. It was not long after this time that his character developed itself in a steadiness of purpose and an unshaken determination to cultivate his mind according to a preconceived scheme of improvement, rare in a young man of his rank, and much more so at that time than in the present age. The habits of his natural associates, those in college language called *gold tufts* and *silk gowns*, were any thing rather than studious, estimable as many of those young men were in private life, and have since shown themselves in the world. Lord Webb Seymour soon adopted a plan, which even the reading men at Oxford seldom thought it necessary to pursue. He resolutely

* The accompanying likeness is from the drawing mentioned at page 405. — ED.

declined all invitations, and during the whole remainder of his stay at Christ Church was never seen at a wine party. Such a course, whatever in this more studious age may be thought, brought down at that time on his head the imputation of great singularity; but his remarkable urbanity of manners, and the entire absence of affectation, preserved to him the respect and regard of those from whose society he thus seemed to withdraw. The reason which Lord Webb gave for thus sacrificing all convivial intercourse was characteristic of his modesty. He felt, he said, that his parts were slow; that he acquired knowledge with less facility than many of his contemporaries; and that he could not hope to compass the objects which he had in view, if he gave up the evening hours, as was then customary, to the pleasures of conversation. The dignity of his mind, always intent on future and even distant schemes of improvement, and hence superior to all momentary emulation, which it is perhaps too much the habit of those who guide our academical studies to encourage, can only be appreciated by those who remember him at this period, and who remember also the frivolous and superficial tone of conversation from which, relatively at least to him, few of his fellow-students, even though not deficient in mental quickness or school learning, were exempt.

Lord Webb Seymour was neither a very good scholar, in the common sense of the word, nor by any means the contrary. He knew well, on every subject, what he knew at all, and his character rendered him averse to spread his reading over a large surface. He read slowly and carefully, possibly too much so; but as on this account he forgot little, he was by this means uninformed on many subjects of general literature. But his peculiar quality was the love of truth, and, as is perhaps the case with all true lovers, he loved that mistress the more in proportion as she was slow in favouring his suit. It was said of him that he would rather get at any thing by the longest process; and, in fact, not having a quick intuition, and well knowing that those who decide instantly are apt not to understand what they decide, he felt a reluctance to acquiesce in what the world call a common-sense view of any philosophical question.

The first subjects that seem to have attached his peculiar attention at Oxford were anatomy and chemistry, especially the latter; for the sake of experiments in which he fitted up a laboratory in his rooms. He acquired also some knowledge in other branches of physical history and philosophy. But his inquisitive mind soon led him to a different walk: he became fond of metaphysical theories; a turn far enough from being uncommon in young men of nineteen, but seldom accompanied with so patient, so sceptical (in the best sense), and so unbiassed a temper.* That he did not come to many conclusions in his psychological investigations, will hardly be thought a proof of his wanting capacity for them; but perhaps it was a real defect in his intellectual character, that he did not grasp a proof, when it was fairly made out, with as much tenacity as he had shown in collecting its elements; and was more ready and ingenious in accumulating analogies and presumptive arguments, than in reducing them to a calculated probability. This may possibly have been the reason, if the fact were as he afterwards believed it to be, that he had no natural turn for strict mathematics.

In these pursuits, and in the society of a few friends, Lord Webb Seymour passed his time at Christ Church till the end of 1797. He now put into execution a scheme which he had been for some time revolving, of passing the next few years at Edinburgh. The high reputation of this university, during that period, for moral and physical philosophy, had made a deep impression on his mind, though he was far from anticipating that Scotland would become his chosen abode for the rest of his life.

It was not long after his settling at Edinburgh that he became intimate with Mr. Horner, as well as with other individuals of a remarkable constellation who illustrated that city; especially Dr. Thomas Brown and Mr. Playfair. Under the auspices of the latter he carried on his inquiries in geology; a science then hardly more than nascent, and to which Lord Webb's attention had been drawn during his residence at Oxford. He travelled in company with Mr. Playfair on several occasions over great part of Scotland, and sometimes in England. Mr. Playfair became also the

instructor of Lord Webb in mathematics, to which he addicted himself for some years with great assiduity, and not without injury to his health. "For the last two months," he says in a letter, dated June, 1799, "I have applied almost exclusively to the study of mathematics, which I intend to prosecute for the next twelve months, though I fear that other avocations will sadly interrupt it. As to my opinions and habits of thinking, you will find my mind nearly in the same state as when we parted. Eager to discover truth in her native simplicity, but growing more and more suspicious of being deluded by those airy phantoms, which the enchantress Falsehood tricks up in the array of truth to delude poor mortals:—

'Dat inania verba;
Dat sine mente sonum, gressusque effingit euntis;
Morte obita quales fama est volitare figuras,
Aut quæ sopitos deludunt somnia sensus.'"

The next years of Lord Webb's life were spent at Edinburgh, interrupted by occasional visits to the South. The following letter of May 18th, 1801, will serve to exemplify his habitual love of knowledge:—

"Edinburgh, May 18. 1801.

"Dear Hallam,

"Had Dame Nature blessed me with Fortunatus's wishing-cap, I should often have made use of it during the last seven months for a flight to your chambers at Lincoln's Inn,—there to have held much high debate on the abstract mysteries of human knowledge, and also on the great events that have been going forward in the world around us. The mail-coach is, perhaps, an invention that argues the progress of civilisation more than any other: to think that in three days my thoughts may be communicated at the distance of four hundred miles makes me exult that I was born in an age when human power has attained so high a pitch; but greater and happier far will be those mortals or rather *incipient immortals,* who in that golden age *predicted by Godwin* shall have acquired the complete dominion of mind over matter, when every illumined spirit, unincumbered by this cold clod of earth, shall glance, like a meteor, through the infinity of

space, and maintain a personal intercourse with the inhabitants of those far distant worlds, which it now strains our imagination but to think on. But here are we, Anno Domini 1801, and we must make the best of it.

"Since my return to Edinburgh I have been working steadily at mathematics, and indeed almost exclusively; for I have at length learnt to confine my attention to two or three subjects at a time, instead of being distracted by a dozen at once, as you may remember to have been the case. Playfair has been my guide; I think myself extremely happy in having so good a one. He has a profound knowledge of the subject, and our intimacy has afforded me opportunities of discussing all my difficulties with him under as little restraint as I should have felt with another person of my own age, with whom I might have been pursuing the study. My progress, however, has not been such as I had hoped for at the beginning of the winter. You know how slow I am at every thing, and most of all at mathematics. Nevertheless, I am resolved not to abandon the science till I have acquired such a knowledge of it as will afford me the clearest insight into the different branches of physics that depend on it. With this view I shall stay at Edinburgh during the next twelvemonth, and persevere in this course of study.

"In the course of the winter I have, in company with a friend, read through Lord Bacon's *De Augmentis*, and we gave every part of it such a discussion, as in times of old you and I were wont to bestow on the pages of Bishop Butler; I hope, too, with equal profit. Though I had reaped no other advantage, I should think myself well repaid by the enthusiasm for science and the improvement in philosophical temper which I must have derived from it. Bacon's mind must have been influenced in all its speculations by an ardent zeal for useful truth, an unaffected candour, and a sublime, yet modest, dignity; qualities which, in the degree to which he possessed them, may be deemed even more extraordinary than the vigour of his comprehensive imagination, and the depth of his judgment. Without habitual sentiments of this kind he could hardly have detected the fallacy of those misguided exertions of the intellect which had been sanctioned by the

labours of ages, nor have had the courage to undertake the reformation which he effected. We are now just entering on the *Novum Organum.* I again attended Stewart's course on Political Economy last winter, and with great satisfaction. A course of lectures cannot give an insight into the depths of a science, but they, at least, give a general view of what may be learnt, and of the means of pursuing it by private study."

But in 1803 a temporary change took place in Lord Webb Seymour's plan of life. The prospect of an invasion, loudly threatened by Bonaparte, had aroused a more unanimous spirit than has been often witnessed in this nation: every one, according to his station, took his place in the numerous corps of volunteers or yeomanry which sprung up on every side. Lord Webb Seymour was not insensible to the call of duty; and relinquished his scientific associates to take the command of a battalion of volunteers, raised in the neighbourhood of Dartmoor. "This new vocation," he writes, in Sept. 1803, "will oblige me to make Devonshire my residence for some time to come." He took accordingly a small house at Torquay, a place then scarcely known beyond the county; but the beauties of which served to compensate in some measure for the sacrifices of society which it entailed. Lord Webb was extremely fond of natural scenery: he had been a picturesque as well as a scientific traveller; and was a warm admirer of the celebrated work of Uvedale Price. He was a good walker, and his tours were frequently on foot; the only mode, as he thought, of travelling in which natural beauty can be fairly appreciated. Nor was Devonshire without its attractions to him as a geologist.

The business of his regiment was, as may be conceived, very toilsome to a man of his character; and in the autumn of 1805, when the apprehensions of a hostile attack had considerably subsided, he left Torquay, and soon returned to his favourite capital of Scotland. But not long after the commencement of this second residence in the North, a most unfortunate change took place in Lord Webb's constitution. Of a robust form, accustomed to much exercise, and rigorously

temperate, he seemed to have the probable elements of health and longevity. This however was far from being the case. The digestive organs began to fail, and to require a continual attention, which he was not ill-disposed to afford; but which came, as often happens, to engross much of his thoughts, and to shut him out from many pleasures, both intellectual and social, which he was formed to enjoy. With no manifest disease, a gradual languor stole over his mind and body, frequently relieved by transient rallying, but on the whole silently increasing for the rest of his life. Edinburgh continued to be his principal quarters; but the loss of some friends, and the removal of others to England, conspired with the decay of his health, to break off, except at intervals, or at least to relax the vigour of those philosophical speculations which he had pursued in the society of a Horner and a Brown. He came not more than two or three times afterwards to England; for the last, in the winter of 1816, when he remained in London for several months.

His pursuits for some years were now directed towards the fine arts, still, however, with more regard to the philosophy of the emotions of taste than to technical knowledge. Mathematical study he was early forced to abandon; and the bodily languor that oppressed him put a stop to the prosecution of geology in the *field;* though he never ceased to take a great interest in the science.

In the year 1810 Lord Webb Seymour purchased a small property on the Clyde, by name Glenarbach. This afterwards passed into the hands of Mr. Robertson, Glasgow. Glenarbach, by its own romantic grounds, and by the magnificent river which almost washed its garden, had many charms in the eyes of so fond an admirer of scenery. He reasoned indeed upon beauty, as he did on every thing else; for no man was ever more desirous of finding a principle; but he also felt it with a pure and placid delight.

In a letter, dated Feb. 16. 1810, he thus describes this place, and his own reasons for choosing it as his residence:—

" Edinburgh, Feb. 16. 1810.

"Dear Hallam,

"I had long been desirous of passing a certain portion of the year in a retirement which would allow me an uninterrupted pursuit of my own peculiar objects of scientific research, and the bad state of health, from which I suffered so many months last year, showed me the necessity of seeking pure air and quiet, as preservatives of a weak constitution. Upon my return to Scotland, I began to look out for a residence in that beautiful country, which lies near the Clyde below Glasgow, and I had soon the good fortune to find a place for sale, which suited me exactly. Within these few days I have agreed for the purchase of it. The estate is small, about sixty English acres. It lies on the north side of the Clyde, between ten and eleven miles below Glasgow, and about four from Dumbarton, of course within an easy ride of Loch Lomond, Roseneath, and other delightful scenery in that neighbourhood. The property extends from the bank of the river up the steep slope of a hill, the surface of which is agreeably diversified with pasture, and wood, and rock. On the first rise of the ground is a small neat dwelling-house, commanding pleasing views of the river and the adjacent country. The late proprietor was a man of a good deal of taste, and has laid out the place very comfortably, though he has left many improvements for a disciple of Price to amuse himself with. The whole place might be literally described in the words of Horace, as

> —— 'modus agri non ita magnus,
> Hortus ubi, et tecto vicinus jugis aquæ fons,
> Et paullum silvæ super his.'

"It will hold me, and my books, and a few friends, and promises a snug retreat. Glasgow will furnish all the comforts of a large town, and the libraries, scientific news, and other literary conveniences of an University. I hope to be settled in my new habitation early in the summer. The name of the place is Glenarbach."

It is certain, that notwithstanding the late failure of health, Lord Webb at this time, and indeed long afterwards, had not

abandoned the generous hope of contributing something to moral philosophy. He flattered himself that the solitude of a retired country-house, might be more favourable than any city could be to such an object. "Nobody can do any thing in London is an opinion (he writes from Glenarbach in 1812) I am more and more confirmed in; and I find Dugald Stewart, and other sedulous labourers in the literary vineyard, were quite of the same mind. David Hume wrote his history in the Cowgate at Edinburgh. You have not seen this Cowgate; and without having seen it, you cannot conceive how completely this residence secluded him from any intrusion of the refined pleasures of life. But Hume was still in Edinburgh, and had resources in a small circle of cultivated minds. Not so Adam Smith, when employed on the 'Wealth of Nations'—he was then living at the small and miserable town of Kirkaldy in Fife, and his only relaxation was in a weekly club composed of the inhabitants of the place. It is not only the time engrossed by society that I find to be the loss in a town; there is a still more serious obstacle to any *independent* pursuit in the sympathy excited by the occupations of other men, who are continually thrusting in upon you political discussions, the business of the world, and the novelties of literature."

The gradual progress, however, of an enfeebling languor soon suspended, and ultimately extinguished, those hopes. He quitted his residence at Glenarbach, and returned to Edinburgh. In a letter dated from thence, May 20. 1814, he gives what may not be an uninteresting character of a distinguished friend.

"Edinburgh, 2. Abercromby Place,
May 20. 1814.

"My dear Hallam,

"A few days ago I gave a line of introduction to you to a friend of mine, with whom, I think, you will be glad to form an acquaintance. The person I allude to is Dr. Brown, who within these three or four years has succeeded Dugald Stewart in the Moral Philosophy chair in the University of Edinburgh. Any man who came after Dugald Stewart must have put his reputation to a very severe test. I am happy to say that Dr. Brown has sustained the trial with the

greatest credit. He is one of the earliest philosophical friends that I grew intimate with in this country, and was a distinguished character in that circle of young men, to which belonged Horner, Brougham, Jeffrey, and others, then unknown, and since so well known, to fame. Of his attainments in literature, as well as in science, of his acuteness, his depth, and his powers of original thinking, I could say a great deal; and I can add, that he is one of the best men I know. His various qualifications and merits you may learn more in detail from Horner; but it is necessary to prepare you for some defects of address and manner, which are likely to appear very prominent to a stranger, and to diminish the impression of his real excellence. He is one of the most sensitive beings I know, yet not reserved and shrinking, but animated, rapid, and talkative; anxious about the appearance he makes in society, yet confident of his own powers, and in his own opinions. These circumstances combine to make him precise, subtle, and a little dogmatical. His ingenuity fatigues by the marks it bears of labour; his mind is too much occupied with its own train of thoughts; and in conversation he is apt to show a keen irritability, quite devoid of malevolence or anger, but inconsistent with that easy flow, which is the principal charm of good company. The presence of strangers, of course, brings out these defects in their greatest degree, and makes his whole manner affected, though he is in fact good-natured, sincere, and open. I can scarcely fancy him appearing to more disadvantage than among a party of *beaux esprits* in London; and it would be injustice not to prepare you for the unfortunate demeanour of a man so deserving of admiration and esteem. His is one of the few minds that politics, and the active professions, leave zealously and exclusively devoted to literary and philosophical pursuits."

Though no longer equal to much continuous exertion, Lord Webb Seymour retained his love of knowledge; and perhaps his reading became more miscellaneous as it became less laborious. The following extracts from his letters will exhibit the general character of his judgment: one relating to a subject

with which he had no close acquaintance, the other to a favourite science: —

. . . . "I have been for some days reading Voltaire's *Histoire Générale.* I have been going on very slowly; and it is a work which should be read slowly in order to be read with advantage: for his comprehensive sketches succeed one another so rapidly, that the memory would grow confused in a cursory perusal. I like to read three or four of his chapters in an evening, and to chew the cud upon them. The *Histoire Générale* is the production of a mind directed by a philosophical spirit, and capable of great views, but biassed by certain errors in reasoning, some defects in moral feeling, and some in temper. The author is occasionally too confident in setting up his own conjectures in opposition to direct testimony. Immorality is apt to be leniently treated by him, when a king or a priest is not the offender, or when the offence is not of such a kind as more peculiarly belongs to the station of a king or a priest. His style is too light and too gay for his subjects, and especially unbecoming of a censor in such grave matters. His antipathy to the Church of Rome extends itself to every thing Christian in a manner that is quite unjustifiable: this is remarkable in his account of the Crusades, in which he scarcely says any thing of the noble acts of heroism displayed in those misguided enterprises, and loses sight of the many beneficial results which indirectly accrued from them to Europe. Then, because the barbarians, and afterwards the semi-barbarians, of Europe are Christians, all other barbarians and semi-barbarians rise in the scale of comparison; the Arabs, the Chinese — I might almost add the Tartars: for how lightly he passes over the horrible destruction inflicted by the armies of Zhingis Khan! Yet notwithstanding these faults, and others, which you, no doubt, could point out better than I can, the *Histoire Générale* is a vast work, and it affords me more delight than any book I have taken up for a long time. Tell me how far you think Voltaire is accurate — *tolerably* accurate — for neither the extent of the work, nor the habits of his mind, can allow me to expect great accuracy. It is

said that Robertson admitted his accuracy, as far as he had examined him. His omission of authorities is a great fault, and he is too negligent of dates. As I was not previously well acquainted with the history of the middle ages, I am obliged to derive assistance from chronological tables."

This letter is dated February 1. 1818. In another, bearing date June 14. he says, "How can I venture to speak of the Anarch old upon this remaining half page? Your remarks might lead me to talk for two hours. Yet I will say that you are quite right in your remark, that the proper rudiments of geology lie in the alluvial and secondary formations. If the Huttonians have attended to these less than they merit, it is because Scotland affords very scanty examples of them. There is scarcely any thing in Scotland of later date than the coal formation. On the other hand, if the English geologists are almost exclusively occupied with the secondary and alluvial formations, and the fossils contained in them, it is because strata of this description form the surface of the greatest part of England. The Scotch geologists are like a set of Christ Church tutors, who have confined their studies chiefly to ancient history; the English are a set of home-taught young members of parliament, deeply learned in Rapin, Rymer, Velly, and Schmidt. Both are labouring in the great cause, and as the science advances, each will have to consider the labours of the other as of more importance."

But the race of this excellent person was more nearly run than his best friends had anticipated. He had so long endured a feeble state of health, and with so little appearance of organic disease, that, little as a restoration to vigour could be hoped, it seemed probable that his systematic care would preserve the frail tenement of so noble a spirit for many years. This, however, was not permitted. "I have not been quite well (he says, November 30. 1818) for between two and three months; am better, but cannot get rid of a cough, which I believe to proceed entirely from weakness of the digestive organs. I do not think I shall be in London next summer." The cough, whatever may have been its origin, soon manifested itself in connexion with symptoms of pulmonary consump-

tion. These made a constant progress during the winter, accompanied with extreme debility, though his very retired life kept almost all his friends in ignorance of the extent of danger. His Grace the Duke of Somerset set out for Edinburgh on receiving an intimation of it, and arrived in time to witness the last stage of decline in his loved and respected brother. Lord Webb Seymour expired on the nineteenth of April, 1819, at the age of forty-two.

Nothing, except a few pages on geology, ever appeared from the pen of Lord Webb. But he had been much accustomed to commit his reflections to paper; and whatever he wrote was clear, precise, and full of thought. He left a considerable quantity of notes designed for a work on the Philosophy of the Human Mind, which, before the entire failure of his health, he had not ceased to contemplate in distant prospect; though, from the slowness of his composition, arising partly from the great labour which he gave, it was not likely, perhaps, under the most favouring circumstances, that he would have given his reflections a methodical form. It was at one time the wish of some of his friends, and especially of his nearest relation, that these fragments of his long-cherished speculations should be given to the world. But it is believed that they were found, on examination, to be in so unconnected a state, as to cause this intention to be abandoned.

It would be doing the utmost injustice to the memory of this most lamented person, were I only to dwell on his intellectual character, or even on those qualities which have been already mentioned—his love of truth and desire of improvement. Not only was Lord Webb Seymour a man of the most untainted honour and scrupulous integrity, but of the greatest benevolence and the warmest attachment to his friends. This was displayed in a constant solicitude for their success, their fame, their improvement; and in a sincerity which made no concessions to their vanity, while its delicate and gentle expression endeared him still more to those who were worthy of his friendship. Neither his constitution, nor his habits of reflection, admitted of strong emotions: he scarcely knew anger, or any of the violent passions; and

perhaps, in considering the mild stoicism of his character, the self-command which never degenerated into selfishness, we are not mistaken in fancying some resemblance between him and Marcus Aurelius. He would at least, in other times, have surely chosen the philosophy of the Porch; but with all the beneficence and kindliness which only the best disciples of that school seem to have evinced.

The suavity of manners and agreeable conversation of Lord Webb Seymour rendered him a favourite among intelligent women; and it will easily be conceived that he had a predilection for their society. Some with whom he lived in constant friendship survive; though a greater part, perhaps, have gone down to the grave like himself. It has been deemed not unfit, in these memoirs of one to whom he was strongly attached, that a few pages should be inserted in order to commemorate a person so accomplished and excellent; and, I have only to lament, that, separated as I was, except at intervals "few and far between," from one of my earliest and most valued friends, I may have omitted much that would have exhibited in a more adequate manner the character of Lord Webb Seymour.

## APPENDIX B. (Page 288.)

### LETTER FROM MR. HORNER TO MALCOLM LAING, ESQ., AUTHOR OF THE HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.

Dear Sir, Edinburgh, 15th May, 1802.

I take the liberty of writing to you, in order to communicate an historical anecdote, the evidence of which has lately come into my hands. When I was in London some time ago, I had a very agreeable opportunity of examining the manuscripts of Mr. Locke. It was on every account interesting, as you may imagine: not only from the superstitious gratification of seeing, in the original, those writings which have had so much influence on mankind; but likewise from a number of miscellaneous papers, which scarcely admit of being published, and yet suggest many pleasing and characteristic views of that great mind.

In a bundle of MSS. on the subject of Toleration, there is a collection of papers relative to the trial of Aikenhead, who was executed at Edinburgh in 1697 for having spoken with doubt, perhaps derision, of the holy doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation. Besides full copies of the indictment, evidence, &c., there are several letters and notes which Locke seems to have collected with much care. Among these, there is one letter so remarkable, that it has suggested to me the idea of giving you information of its contents. All that we know of Aikenhead's case, from the reports hitherto printed, is the melancholy fact of his judicial murder, and the violent construction of the statutes upon which he was prosecuted. From the minute description contained in the authority which I am about to quote, his story acquires a more powerful claim to interest, becomes more conspicuous in the general picture of the age, and adds another deep shade to those colours which you have touched so forcibly.

The paper I have alluded to is a letter from Lord Anstruther, whose name you may remember from the epigram in which his professional merits are recorded. It is addressed to one Mr. Cunningham in London, and is marked on the back in Locke's hand-writing — "Aikenhead; Lord Anstruther's letter concerning him, 26 Jan. 97." I have not room to copy the whole letter, which is curious throughout, and shows a mind moderate by disposition, but grovelling in the lowest prejudices.

The paragraph, which refers to Aikenhead, I will give you at length. After entertaining his correspondent with several phenomena and prodigies, such as the river Clyde running suddenly dry, and the daughter of a gentleman in the west being possessed with a devil, and vomiting hot coals, of which he had transmitted a narrative, attested by ministers, to my Lord Tullibardine, he proceeds in these words: —

"We had lately an anomaly and monster of nature I may call him, who was execut for cursing and reviling the persons of the Trinity: he was eighteen years of age, not vicious, and extremely studious. Fountainhall and I went to him in prison, and I found a work on his spirit, and wept that ever he should maintained such tenets, and desired a short reprieve, for his eternal state depended upon it. I plead for him in Councel, and brought it to the Chan: vote; it was told it could not be granted, unless the ministers would intercede. I am not for consulting the church in state affairs. I doe think he would have proven an eminent Christian had he lived, but the ministers out of a pious tho' I think ignorant zeal, spoke and preached for cutting him off. I find capital punishment inflicted most against crimes that disturb the society and government, and not against the heinousness of the sin against God; for lawyers say in that case, '*Satis est Deum habere ultorem.*' And so stealing a sheep when one is hungry, or speaking against the king, are punished by death; whereas cursing, lying, slandering, drunkenness, &c., are scarcely taken notice of by our law; but our ministers generally are of a narrow sett of thoughts and confined principles, and not able to bear things of this nature."

It occurred to me that you would be pleased to have an account of such a letter, and perhaps might be inclined to make a more important use of the circumstances which it authenticates. Mr. Thomson encouraged me to write to you. If you shall feel any inclination to employ the letter as a document, I make no doubt of obtaining permission. The MSS. of Locke belong to the family of Lord King; but are at present in the hands of a gentleman who has full power over them, and to whom I could make an application without any restraint.

I have the honour to be, dear Sir,
Yours, with much respect,
FRA. HORNER.

# APPENDIX C. (Page 401.)

## A SHORT ACCOUNT OF A LATE SHORT ADMINISTRATION.

April, 1807.

THE late administration came into employment on the 7th of February, 1806, and was removed on the 24th of March, 1807, having lasted just one year and forty-five days.

In that space of time,

The system of the army has received the most important improvement of which it was susceptible, by *limiting the period of service.* The character and station of the soldiery are raised, by delivering them from a tenure of servitude for life; and the inducements to enter into the service are both increased, and addressed to a better class of population, by the grant of a provision for life, at the end of the soldier's engagement.

THE SLAVE TRADE HAS BEEN ABOLISHED.

An effort was made, in the *negotiation with France,* to restore to this country and to the rest of Europe the blessings of peace. That sincere wish was disappointed by the ambition and duplicity of the enemy; but the negotiation afforded his Majesty the opportunity of manifesting to the court of Russia his faithful adherence to the spirit and principles of their alliance, and of strengthening that connection, so important to the liberties of Europe, by the strictest union of councils and measures. The fidelity which was preserved towards all his Majesty's allies throughout that discussion, and in the subsequent communication to Parliament, restored the confidence of foreign courts, which had been recently shaken by a mischievous and dishonourable publication of state papers.

All projects have been discountenanced, of exciting to premature and unavailing struggles the wasted force of the Continent, that, under a wise reserve, it might collect itself for an effectual exertion. At the same time no opportunity has been passed over of aiding, from the resources of England,

such of the foreign powers as were brought into conflict with France by the progress of her unbounded encroachments. Our rights of maritime warfare, contested only by ignorant declamations, have been maintained in unimpaired possession, while the true interests of the nation have been saved, and its high character confirmed, by forbearance towards the neutrals in their distress. The misunderstandings which threatened a rupture with America have been removed by the moderation of both parties; and the foundations have been laid of a permanent relation between the two states of the world most naturally allied to each other, by origin, by a common language and liberty, and by the mutual interests of an immense commerce.

A system has been framed, and already completed, in almost all its details, for controlling the collection and issue of the *public money*, in such a manner as effectually to prevent in future abuses and embezzlements similar to those which were brought to light by the commissioners of naval and military inquiry. Acts have passed for regulating the receipt of all the great branches of the public revenue, the customs, the excise, the post-office, and the stamps, by which all remittances and payments are carried immediately to the public account at the Bank of England; and checks are established which render it impossible, without complete detection, to apply monies drawn from the Bank to any other than the public service.

The Board of Commissioners for *auditing the public accounts* has been new-modelled, in order that the enormous arrear of outstanding accounts may be examined and settled without farther procrastination, and at the same time to establish, as the most effectual check upon the current expenditure, an immediate audit of the accounts of each preceding year. These commissioners, under the special instructions they have received from the late Board of Treasury, may likewise be considered as a permanent establishment for inquiring into abuses in the public expenditure.

The establishment of the *staff* has been greatly reduced. There has been a great diminution of expense in the *barrack* department. There has been a reduction of the establishment

of the *commissariat.* The debt incurred upon the *civil list,* by its excesses since the last estimates presented to the House of Commons, has been defrayed out of droits of admiralty which fell to the crown; and an attempt has been made to prevent the recurrence of such excesses, by directing quarterly estimates to be previously made of all the heads of expense, and all former demands to be satisfied before new expenses can be incurred; by introducing a more minute specification into the accounts, and by securing a more strict appropriation, of the several sums issued, to the services for which they were allotted. *Thirty-six offices* in the customs in Ireland have been abolished by an act of the present session.

A *select committee* of the House of Commons has been appointed to examine and consider what regulations and checks have been established, in order to control the several branches of the public expenditure in Great Britain and Ireland, and how far the same have been effectual; and what farther measures can be adopted for reducing any part of the said expenditure, or diminishing the amount of salaries and emoluments, without detriment to the public service; and to report, with their observations, to the House.

A new *plan of finance* has been adopted, which will defray the ordinary expenditure of the war, without any immediate increase of taxes; and provides for that expenditure throughout the utmost probable duration of hostilities, with the smallest practicable increase of taxes in any future year. It is another principle of this new plan, that, while it accelerates the operation of the sinking fund, it will distribute its effect more equally over all the years of the period.

The West India colonies have been secured in a supply, no longer precarious, of articles of the first necessity, by the *American Intercourse Act;* which provided by parliamentary authority a regular course of remedy for an acknowledged evil, in the room of continual violations of the law and bills of indemnity.

The final purpose of the union with Ireland has been kept distinctly in view; a full participation by both countries of the same liberties, civilisation, and wealth. The first step has been made towards an entire freedom of commercial

intercourse between the islands, by the Act *to permit the free interchange of every species of grain between Great Britain and Ireland.* By placing a wise reliance in the constitutional powers of the law, conspiracy and insurrection have been suppressed without departing from the forms of justice. The *Habeas Corpus* Act has not been suspended. There has been no recourse to *martial law.* The administration of that country has been conciliatory and firm, and guided by a disposition to give real effect to those laws which have already conceded, in part, the just rights of the people.

The late ministers had already made considerable progress in arrangements for extending, still further, to all descriptions of the King's subjects, the benefits of equal laws and the privileges of the English constitution. Among such plans the reform of the Scottish judicature, especially the introduction of jury-trial in civil causes, was so far advanced that it would be improper not to point it out in concluding this enumeration.

In the prosecution of these measures, the ministers had to contend with an opposition of a peculiar character. Parliament exhibited the novel and extraordinary spectacle, of ministers required, and refusing, to arm the executive with powers beyond the law; and of an opposition, invariably resisting every thing like concession and indulgence to the subject, and maintaining, on all occasions, the prerogative of the crown against the rights of the people. Most of them were already placemen, pensioners, or reversionaries.

When the late ministers were called to the councils of the King, parliament and the people expressed a firm confidence in their integrity, experience, and talents. They have made no sacrifices to popularity; they risked it all, to discharge faithfully and consistently their duties to the public. They have made no sacrifice for the sake of power; but considered it no longer the object of their ambition, when it ceased to be compatible with the free exercise of their judgment for the public good. Their claims to the confidence of parliament and the people are confirmed and multiplied. Their services are the acts of little more than a single year; but they were not mere expedients to get through the year;

they were measures founded upon large principles, and productive of lasting and extensive effects. They will form an era in the history of the country; and the authors of them would be insensible to their own certain fame, if, in retiring from power, they felt any other regret than at being disappointed in those farther councils which they had prepared for the security of the state and the happiness of the people.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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